The Scottish Romance Tradition within the European Context (*c.* 1375 – *c.* 1550)

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Sergi Mainer Santander

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is all my own work unless otherwise acknowledged in the text, and that it has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Sergi Mainer Santander.

DEDICATION

To my parents

Als meus pares

Ara et penso — tan lluny! —
i t'invento un posat
expentant, perquè m'omplis
aquest buit de la tarda.
(Miquel Martí i Pol, 1929-2003)

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to demonstrate that the medieval Scottish historical romances Barbour's *Bruce* and Blind Hary's *Wallace* and the anonymous Arthurian texts *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane* belong to the same literary tradition. *Rauf Coilyear* and *Clariodus* will also be examined, though less exhaustively, within these parameters. An analysis of the political motivations and literary and philosophical fabric of the works will reveal the similarities between them. These romances will be compared to their paradigmatic counterparts or originals, mainly French, such as Chrétien de Troyes' *Romans* (late twelfth century), Joinville's *Vie de Saint Louis* (1309), Cuvelier's *Chanson de Bertrand de Guesclin* (late fourteenth century), or the sources of the Scottish Arthurian works, *Lancelot do Lac* (1215-25) and the *First Continuation of Perceval* (early thirteenth century). When pertinent, Anglo-Norman, English, Provençal and Catalan works will also be alluded to. This comparison will highlight, on the one hand, the shared *topoi* characteristic of a broader European tradition; and, on the other, the exclusively Scottish features. The conclusion will elucidate the organic literary and ideological components which constitute the unity of the Scottish romance tradition.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the period after the Wars of Independence in Scotland was mainly presided by the Stuart Kings. Although during Robert I's reign, the English recognised Scotland as an autonomous country by the Treaty of Northampton (1328), the Anglo-Scottish conflicts lasted all through the late Middle Ages. Both Robert I and his son David II faced the renewal of war instigated not only by the English but also by the Balliols and their followers. After their deaths, the first Stuarts, Robert II and Robert III "acted like any other ambitious noble family, stockpiling lands and power by grant, forfeiture and marriage." James I was assassinated by members of his own household (1437) and his son, James II, endured the rebellion of the powerful and influential Douglases in the 1450s (Lynch 1997: 133-34). This political agitation may appear as an impediment for either economic or cultural development.

Nonetheless, this was not always the case. Generally, the nobility and the royal house tended to work together despite the tensions that such a partnership created. James I is regarded as the monarch who established the groundings of royal authority, which his successors were going to follow (Ibid. 134-35). Within this political panorama, although the court was comparatively smaller than those of England and France, the country developed economically. Geographical remoteness from continental Europe did not result in underdeveloped and restricted financial status, either. There was increasing trade between Scotland and France, the traditional ally, the Low Countries and the nations along the coasts of the Baltic and Northern Seas (Bawcutt 1976: 23).

Culturally, the Stuart kings were great promoters of cultural activities:

> Of the Stuarts it may be said that they were a gifted race that has bequeathed to the world a remarkable heritage of poetry, drama, music and architecture. The dynasty [...] produced poets and scholars such as James I and James VI, patrons of arts and sciences such as James IV and Charles II, and lovers of painting and fine books such as Charles I. (Cherry 1987: 7)

As well as writing *the Kingis Quair*, James I enjoyed the company of artists, writers and craftsmen at his court. One of his favourites, Robert Cochrane designed the Great Hall of Stirling Castle (MacQueen 1967: 206). Royal and noble patronage also encouraged erection of churches, which are still preserved, in places such as Stirling or Perth. The preservation of stone carving in the Western Isles suggests the existence of artistic vitality at the northern courts, whilst the contemporary Gaelic poems (*c.* 1310-1500) come mainly from Perthshire and Argyllshire (Thomson 1993: 130). Therefore, there are signs of rich cultural life all over the nation.

Before the building of the University of Saint Andrews, Scottish scholars went to Oxford, Cambridge or prestigious continental centres such as Paris, Padua or Bologna. Even after that, they continue to attend foreign universities such as Cologne or Louvain to complete their studies. Therefore, the Scottish men of letters had the opportunity of being acquainted with an enormous range of the philosophical and literary schools in all over Europe. This "highly developed sense of scholarship was both self-consciously patriotic and northern European" (Lynch 1993: 19).

As for literature in Scots in late medieval and early Renaissance Scotland, the first preserved text, Barbour's *Bruce*, dates from *c.*1375. When measured against other

European literary traditions in the vernacular, *The Bruce* is a rather late text. There are examples of literary works in languages such as Catalan or Spanish from the late twelfth century, French and Provençal from eleventh century or German and English from even earlier times. This does not mean that no-one wrote literature in Scots before Robert II's reign. It can just be regarded as an accident that no other poem or romance has survived in Scots, which was the language of the Scottish court much earlier than the late fourteenth century. In fact, there are some preserved compositions which in some way or other are related to Scotland. *The Gododdin*, written in Welsh by a bard called Aneirin in 697, relates the heroic death of his lord and fellow compatriots in a battle in Lothian. Its context and its values take the reader to a pre-Christian world. In a completely different milieu, Saint Adomnán composed in Latin his *Vita Columbae* (c. 697), in which the author designs his narrative following the parameters of a saint's legend. In the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, Guillaume le Clerc wrote the Anglo-Norman *Roman de Fergus*, a comic Arthurian text. Although there are no surviving manuscripts of this romance in Scotland, textual evidence suggests that Guillaume knew the country quite well (Owen [ed] 1991: 162-69). All these different works show the multi-lingual and multi-cultural diversity of Scotland in the Middle Ages. The emergence of Scots as the language of politics and of literature in the late medieval period was a consequence of the gradual establishment and centralisation of power of the royal house. This also explains why the major bulk of surviving compositions in Scots belong to the time of the reigns of the Stuart dynasty.

In Scots, then, the medieval and early renaissance literary canon generally comprises, in chronological order, Barbour, James I, Henryson, Blind Hary, Dunbar, Douglas and Lindsay. Sometimes anonymous works such as *Rauf Coilyear*, *Golagros and Gawane* or *The Thrie Tailes of the Thrie Priests of Peblis* are included in this canon. Nevertheless, these *makars*[1] and texts are not normally considered a unified tradition. Only some of them are regarded as writing within the same courtly atmosphere. The trinity of Henryson-Dunbar-Douglas comprises the core of this literary corpus. They composed their works under royal patronage and their influences were broad: from Chaucer and alliterative verse to "many Latin and continental vernacular works." Their interest in Classical languages and their stylistic features "with an emphasis on translation" showed signs of the penetration of humanistic ideas and practices in Scotland (MacQueen 1967: 202).

Yet when it comes to the Scottish romances, there has never been an attempt to place them within a literary tradition of its own. At most, it has been recognised that "most Scottish romances are clearly in different ways concerned with issues of kingship and the proper conduct of the nobility" (Edwards 2000: 72). But having this sole common trait would not constitute a solid argument for considering them a uniform tradition altogether. Barbour's *Bruce* and Hary's *Wallace* seem to be too far apart from the Arthurian *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane*, not to mention the only preserved Charlemagne romance in Scotland, *Rauf Coilyear*.

The Bruce (*c.* 1375) is John Barbour's only surviving poem, and stands as the first preserved literary work in Scots in the history of Scottish literature. There are two

[1] The early Scottish poets writing in Scots are referred to as *makars*. This term comes from the Greek understanding of poets as "builders." Literary composition is, then, a rhetorical and thematic "building" with various layers of expression (styles) and interpretation (different meanings of a text).

surviving manuscripts: "Cambridge (C), which begins at 4.57, and Edinburgh (E), the only complete manuscript, [written] in 1489" (Duncan [ed] 1997: 32). Historical evidence places Barbour's lifetime some time around 1320 and 1395. Thus, he was a contemporary of the best medieval English poets: Chaucer, the Pearl-Gawain-poet and William Langland. Dates and textual evidence reveal, however, that the Archdeacon's text is not influenced by any of the three Englishmen. Hence, there are no traces of the burden of Chaucerian tradition, which exerted such a profound impact on the rest of the major medieval *makars*.

Barbour's *Bruce* is often put alongside Hary's *Wallace* (1476-78),[2] of which there is only one extant manuscript, copied by John Ramsay in 1488. Owing to Barbour's and Hary's historically based subjects dealing with the Wars of Independence, comparison between them has been unavoidable. Moreover, textual borrowing from Barbour and his thematic influences on Hary are widely acknowledged (Duncan [ed] 1997: 32; McDiarmid [ed] 1968: I.xxxvii; Wilson 1990: 190). As Wilson remarks:

> In 1488 and 1489, John Ramsay copied Hary's *Wallace* and John Barbour's *Bruce* into a pair of manuscripts. John Jamieson edited them as a pair in 1820. Before and after Jamieson, other readers felt a similar inclination to place the two poems side by side. This impulse is natural, for the *Bruce* and the *Wallace* are alike in several ways. (Wilson 1990: 189)

Nonetheless, it can also be argued that they have as many as they have divergences things in common. Stylistically, they are very distinct pieces. In the century standing between the two texts, Scottish literature changed considerably. Hary wrote at the

[2] McDiarmid argues that Hary could not have written The *Wallace* before 1471 or later than 1479. He concludes that Hary most probably composed his romance between 1476 and 1478. (McDiarmid [ed] 1968: I. xvi)

time of the great courtly *makars*, in a much richer literary milieu than that of Barbour. Furthermore, although both texts develop martial and spiritual approaches, *The Wallace* relies on a more overtly allegorical framework, whilst *The Bruce's* main focus is on knightly action.

In 1993, Goldstein published *The Matter of Scotland*, the most recent, substantial study dealing with these two romances as well as with John of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum*. His analysis was both historical and literary, leaning on cultural materialist perspectives. The outcome challenged many previous assumptions about the texts, above all about Barbour's *Bruce*. Goldstein reasoned that the royal and aristocratic interests behind the texts do not allow for the representation of the concerns of other social groups. Yet he did not attempt to carry out a comparative study between these works, but rather he highlighted the ideological fabrics of the three of them. Neither was it his intention to complete a general study which would also concentrate on literary similarities between *The Bruce* and *The Wallace*.

These two romances are rarely connected with the Arthurian texts save few exceptions.[3] In fact, not even the Arthurian compositions are thought to belong to the same corpus. The only common element that is normally ascribed to *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane* is their critical representation of King Arthur, a feature which is already present in the French originals. From the anonymous *Lancelot of the Laik* (late fifteenth-century), existing in a sole manuscript (Cambridge University Kk.1.15), scholars tend to highlight the Prologue as being along the lines of the Scottish courtly tradition of the time. Its allegorical opening situates the Prologue in the same literary tradition of James I's *Kingis Quair* or William Dunbar's

[3] In his introduction to *The Wallace*, McDiarmid suggests that Blind Harry might be the author of *Golagros and Gawane* owing to some thematic and formal similarities. (McDiarmid [ed] 1968: I.cviii-cxxxii)

Golden Targe. It is the only completely original passage of the romance as the other three books are a translation (or rather an adaptation) of some episodes of the French prose *Lancelot do Lac*. In turn, its content is related to advisory works such as Gilbert of the Haye's instructive prose (mid-fifteenth century), John of Ireland's *Meroure of Wyssdome* (1490) or the later *Complaint of Scotland* (*c.* 1540), all of them conforming to the Advice to Princes tradition, as Maptone showed in her doctoral thesis "The Advice to Princes Tradition in Scottish Literature."[4]

The equally anonymous *Gologros and Gawain* (*c.* 1470), of which there is no surviving manuscript, is first preserved in an edition by Chepman and Myllar from 1508. Like *Lancelot of the Laik*, it is based on some passages of a long French romance, *The First Continuation of* Chrétien de Troyes' *Perceval*. Stylistically, it is regarded as belonging to a similar tradition as the northern English alliterative tradition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the alliterative *Morte Arthure* and *The Awntyrs of Arthure*. It is precisely with the last of these that the Scottish text shares most features. From the English work, it borrowed a complicated thirteen-line stanza form and a diptych thematic structure. In fact, the only extensive study on *Golagros and Gawain* during the last thirty years is a joint approach to the Scottish romance and *The Awntyrs of Arthure* in Kelly's doctoral thesis "The Northern Arthur."[5] She discusses the critical vision of the British King in the north of England and Scotland by analysing the two works.

The *Taill of Rauf Coilyear* (*c.* 1470), whose author is also unknown, is the only surviving romance in Scots dealing with the Matter of France. The first part of the

[4] Mapstone, Sally Louise. "The Advice to Princes Tradition in Scottish Literature." Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1986.
[5] Kelly, Constance S. "The Northern Arthur." Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1975.

text, however, does not treat the main motif of the French Chansons de geste dealing with the figure of Charlemagne, the fight against the heathen. Rather, it relates the conflict between the courtly manners of the Frankish Emperor and the rusticity of the collier. Only in the last stanzas does the story introduce a battle against a pagan emir and his conversion. *Rauf Coilyear* has been largely neglected by scholars. *Clariodus* (first half of the sixteenth century) is a translation of the French *Cleriadus et Meliadice* (c. 1450-1470). The Scottish work will be used to demonstrate that not all the long romances written in late medieval Scotland express the same rhetorical and political interests.[6] Although some of the literary conventions may appear in *Lancelot of the Laik*, the central theme has little to do with the other works. It focuses on the hero's individual enterprise, rather than the collective good. This is a typical trait of French *romans courtois*. The Scottish Text Society is currently preparing a new edition of the text, which has not been published since 1830. Needless to say, *Clariodus* has not received a lot of scholarly attention either. Hence, from this evidence and studies carried out so far, there appears to be little indication that the Scottish romances may form a consistent literary corpus at all.

In this thesis, however, I shall argue that *The Bruce, The Wallace, Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawain* belong to the same literary tradition.[7] This tradition is different but interrelated to that of the great *makars*. The study is divided into three large thematic sections and four chapters. In the first chapter, I shall analyse the

[6] To this purpose, *Sir Eger and Sir Gryme* (first mentioned in 1497) would have also been useful. The choice of *Clariodus* is due to the less corrupted edition in which it is preserved. *Sir Eger* has survived in two versions with modernised spelling: the Huntington-Laing version is the one preserving more Scottish traits, whereas the Percy version is far more anglicised.

[7] The Alexander romances will be not thoroughly examined in this study. The anonymous *Buik of Alexander* (1438) and *Buik of King Alexander the Conquerour* (attributed, though not unanimously, to Gilbert of the Haye, 1499) will be sporadically mentioned. Both texts translate two episodes from the French Romances of Alexander: *Li Fuerre de Gadres* and *Les Voeux du Paon*. The *Buik of Alexander* generally presents a more literal translation than the other Scottish work.

representations of kingship, freedom and identity and how these concepts are connected to the actual historical and political situation of Scotland in the late Middle Ages. This will reveal the ideological tenets of the compositions. In the second and third chapters, the constructs of chivalry and knighthood will be discussed, first in the historical romances, and then in the Arthurian ones. This will show the similar literary fabric of the works. The last chapter will deal with the distinctively Scottish progression of the heroes. The philosophical and religious influences and the way in which they are connected to the main political ideas will be emphasised.

There are two essential reasons why the French tradition will be deployed as the main focus of the comparison. First, works such as *Lancelot of the Laik*, *Golagros and Gawane* and *Clariodus* are translations/adaptations of French originals, while *Rauf Coilyear* is based on the Matter of France and both Barbour and Hary were familiar with French literature either directly or, in the case of the latter, through the mediation of English and Scottish poets. Second, literary composition in French was very rich and prolific all through the late Middle Ages to the extent that they exerted immense influence on the vast majority of European vernacular literatures.

Likewise, the three great Matters corpora (the Matter of Britain, the Matter of France and the Matter of the Classics) originated in France and spread all over Europe very quickly. The same occurred with the Tristan myth: the romances of Thomas of Britain and Béroul (and latterly the prose version) were translated into most vernacular languages of the time. Therefore, in order to evaluate the position of the Scottish romances within the European milieu, the French tradition seems to provide the comparison with all the necessary elements.

There are also several allusions to Anglo-Norman, English and Catalan romances. These comparisons will not be arbitrary, but will be made to highlight the *topoi* which the Scottish texts shared with broader European literary practice and those which are exclusively inherent to the Scottish romance tradition. The conclusion will permit me to state the distinctive and organic features which establish a Scottish tradition in the composition of romances within both the European and the Scottish contexts.

CHAPTER 1

NATIONAL CONSTRUCTS IN THE MEDIEVAL SCOTTISH ROMANCES

Introduction

According to Barrell,

> The eleventh-century kingdom of the Scots was a somewhat uneasy amalgam of several different peoples, languages and cultures. It had been drawn together by a combination of circumstances and was to prove remarkably resilient as a political entity, despite its internal diversity. [...] The line of Kenneth MacAlpin, albeit its different branches, was well established as the ruling house. [...] The kingdom of Scotland familiar to later ages was beginning to emerge from the early medieval mists. (Barrell 2000: 11-12)

These singularities of the country during the late Middle Ages already suggest that notions of self-government and kingship allow for a specific political milieu, conditioning and contextualising the ideas of identity, freedom and nationhood. These factors also aided the creation of a shared national experience which purported to amalgamate the distinct peoples of Scotland. The historical premises which forged a unified Scottish identity were subsequently reconstructed and codified in official documents such as the Declaration of Arbroath,[8] historical chronicles and literary texts. All this written evidence indicates the internalisation of national consciousness. The external pressure exerted by the English during this period seems to be the fundamental

[8] Composed in 1320, it is regarded as the first declaration conspicuously postulating Scotland's independence before the Pope: "the letter is an appeal for justice, and a declaration on behalf of Bruce: but it is also a manifesto of a united nation, determined to resist English aggression." (Dickinson, Donaldson and Milne [ed] 1952: 131)

primum mobile giving weight to the term nationalism. These concepts and the historical particularities of the kingdom are reflected in most late medieval romances.

In this chapter, I shall examine the representation and interrelation of kingship, identity, freedom and nationhood in late medieval Scottish literature. To illustrate my study, Barbour's *Bruce* and Hary's *Wallace* and the anonymous *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane* will be used. *The Bruce* (*c.* 1375) was the first conscious attempt to create a national literature to set alongside those already existing in Europe, whilst Hary's *Wallace* (1476-78)[9] reassessed the life of its hero in the more developed literary atmosphere of the greatest medieval *makars*. As for the less known chivalric romances, *Lancelot of the Laik*, a late fifteenth-century text, and *Golagros and Gawane*, similar in date of composition (*c.* 1470), can be regarded as selections and reinterpretations of the French *Lancelot do Lac* and the *First Continuation* of Chrétien de Troyes' *Conte du Graal* respectively. It will be argued that such re-workings of the originals serve to emphasise the Scottish historical context. Therefore, although *The Bruce* and *The Wallace* seem to be the most valuable texts for a discussion of these concepts in virtue of their historical contextualisation, the authors of *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane* also scrutinise the nation's realities through the medium of the mythological Arthurian world.[10] The masterly deployment of rhetorical devices permits them to unify these themes despite the different characteristics of each narrative.[11]

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[9] McDiarmid argues that Hary could not have written The *Wallace* before 1471 or later than 1479. He concludes that Hary most probably composed his romance between 1476 and 1478. (McDiarmid [ed] 1968: I. xvi)

[10] The figure of Arthur was politicised in both England and Scotland. The English used him as a means to claim overlordship of Scotland: for instance, "Edward I of England, in a letter to the Pope, argued that Arthur, King of Britons, has held the Scots in subjection" (Alexander 1975: 19); whereas many late medieval Scottish chronicles refuted Arthur's claims over Britain as a whole.

[11] The erudite use of rhetoric should not be overlooked when referring to the Scottish tradition since Jack has successfully regarded Rhetoric as one of the major unifying elements (if not the main one) which is present from *The Bruce* up to at least 1707. (Jack and Rozendaal [ed] 1997: xxv)

To give an accurate analysis of the authors' concern with the Scottish political situation and the way in which it is posited and debated in the romances, first of all it will be necessary to investigate the birth and consolidation of identity and kingship and their interrelation with the notions of national and individual freedom in medieval Scotland. Secondly, within this historical milieu, the portrayal of kingship in the four narratives will be studied. Thirdly, the constructions and reasons behind the authors' stress on liberty will be analysed. Finally, the representation of nationhood and the articulation of nationalistic discourses will be examined. The conclusion will trace the interrelations between these concepts and their connection with Scotland's historical situation. At the same time, it will assess the extent to which these romances contributed to the unifying construction of the Scottish national consciousness.

Notions of Nation, Identity and Freedom in Medieval Scotland

As opposed to other Western constructions of national consciousness, in medieval Scotland the issue of Scottish identity does not stem from a racial, territorial or linguistic unity:

> As a land, Scotland is thoroughly diverse, divided rather than united by geography. It was the land of many peoples, Scots, Picts, British, English and Norse in the Dark Ages, with later additions of Norman-French and Flemings. Nor is there a single 'native' Scottish language: there are at least two – Gaelic and Scots. (Webster 1997: 2)

With this statement, Webster implies a non-essentialist genesis of the Scottish identity in its origins. Only once the idea of Scotland as a single nation was completely rooted in people's minds, could a more artificial re-construction of common ancestry be promoted.

The romances treated here and historical chronicles played a decisive part in the establishment of both a historical and mythological past, amalgamating the experiences of all the inhabitants of the realm. The chronicles of Fordun, Bower and Boece and the romances of Barbour and Hary recreated overtly, as the Scottish Arthurian romances did more implicitly, the Scottish past projecting the conception of nationhood in a manner in which it still survives today.

Nevertheless, the two factors which facilitated the emergence of a shared sentiment of unity among the Scots were much more pragmatic than its future redefinition:

> Two things very gradually worked to bring disparate peoples together: first the increasing acceptance of a single faith, as Christian missionaries in the sixth to ninth centuries gradually converted the different tribes; and the even more gradual ascendancy from the ninth century of a single line of kings, who ruled over Picts and Scots as the kingdom of Alba. (Webster 1997: 3)

Notwithstanding that, it would be rather adventurous to claim that there is a common zeal for national identity among the Scots from such an early stage in history. This progressive recognition of a unifying commonwealth helped the rise of nationalism when its personal and national liberty was threatened during the Wars of Independence (1296-1314).

It is no coincidence that Edward planned and executed his invasion of Scotland immediately after the deaths of the last representatives of the Canmore dynasty — Alexander III died in 1286 and Margaret in 1290. This menace to national survival is summed up in the following way by Barrow: "Even today a country's freedom may mean its independence from external powers" (Barrow 1979: 16). This was exactly the

situation of Scotland during the Wars of Independence. Scotland had to defend its freedom as an autonomous nation against England: "the external power."

As early as 1290 the Treaty of Bingham, although it did not explicitly mention freedom or liberty generally, made reference to "liberties in particular:" rights, laws, liberties (Barrow 1979: 22). However, as soon as Edward I deposed Balliol, he dismantled the "Scottish state apparatus" (Goldstein 1993: 47). The abolition of Scottish institutions is considered to have given rise to the first signs of Scottish nationalism among the nobility. For this reason, Goldstein equates the defence of Scotland with the defence of secular and ecclesiastical centres of government. These institutions represented not only the actual mechanisms of power through which the king and the Church exercised their authority but, at a symbolic level. According to Webster, they also were the pillars of Scottish identity.[12]

Goldstein claims that, although the lowest classes came to sympathise with and support the rebellion, they began to back the Scottish nobility because the latter offered them the possibility of living in better conditions than their actual situation under the English yoke. In his opinion, nationalistic ideals had little to do with the motivations of the Third Estate (Goldstein 1993: 51). Yet, it seems logical to consider that there should have been a growing sense of nationalism among the soldiers who fought with Wallace and Bruce since "they did fight, like their leaders, in circumstances when it would have been simpler and safer not to do so" (Webster 1997: 89). Either they essentially fought

[12] The importance of symbolism in the creation and development of a national consciousness should not be ignored. It was not a gratuitous act of authoritativeness and domination when Edward I took the Stone of Destiny to England — the Stone being a symbol of Scottish independence. In the late Middle Ages, myth was almost as important as history for the birth and consolidation of national identities:

> The three Scots compilations [...] develop an appeal to natural law by stressing the familial aspect of their pretended history. The nation, when it arrived in a northern region of Spain, before its settlements in Ireland and Scotland, had an original mother-queen Scota and an original father-king Galados. These names refer respectively to a hypothesised Scythian eastern origin and the Gadelic and Gaelic language spoken by the family or tribe. (McDiarmid 1979: 7-8)

for social reasons or for their country's autonomy (or for both as I believe), these historical events are ingeniously adapted by Barbour and Hary in order to present a united nation confronting its enemies.

In "The Idea of Freedom in Late Medieval Scotland," Barrow claims that the Declaration of Arbroath (1320) is the best illustration of Scotland's desire for freedom in that period. The Declaration points out that "we [Scots] are fighting for freedom — for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself" (Barrow 1979: 28). Barrow interprets these lines as follows: "the freedom that an honest man puts before wealth and glory and for which he will fight to the death is surely his own personal freedom. [...] The independence of a kingdom from claims of hegemony put forward by another kingdom became firmly associated with the concept of individual freedom" (Barrow 1979: 32). It is at least striking for a modern reader, who tends to relate personal freedom to democracy, to find such an assertion about feudal times.[13] However, this did not mean that after 1320 each Scot enjoyed personal liberty as understood nowadays. It is one thing to express an ideal a written document, but it is a very different one to put into practice. As Barrow himself concludes, "a free kingdom began to be conceived as a community of free men, even if the idea still outran reality." (Barrow 1979: 32)

All these images of identity, freedom and nation were to be reflected in the literature of Scotland soon after the Wars of Independence. Although Bannockburn is widely regarded as the definitive battle which secured the Independence of the kingdom up to the Act of Union, during the late Middle Ages the successors of Robert I had to confront threats to their sovereignty more often than they would have liked. Hence, it is evident that literature, as an expression of human activity, exhibited these fears by means of a

[13] Berlin argues, however, that, although we assume that democracy should provide a better guarantee of our personal liberties, the link made between freedom and democracy is not so obvious. (Berlin 1958: 14)

thorough discussion of the nature and requirements of freedom, nationhood and identity through representation of kingship.

Representations of Kingship in the Scottish Romances

At a basic level the medieval notion of kingship stems from the classical tension — and necessary reconciliation — between strict justice and mercy. Aquinas' definition of kingship offers a starting point:

> The king should recognize that he has a duty to act in his kingdom like the soul in the body and God in the world. If he recognizes this, he will be driven by a zeal for justice when he considers that he has been appointed to exercise judgement over the kingdom in God's place, and he will acquire kindness and mercy when he regards the individuals under his rule as members of his own body.[14] (*De Regimine Principum,* ch. 12)

Essentially, he sees good government as *Rex imago Dei*; that is, as the terrestrial mirror of the divine synthesis of justice and mercy ordained by God. The romances problematise different conceptions of this subject in order to provide a solution to the suitable royal government required by Scotland.

The hero's first intervention already specifies the particularities of kingship in *The Bruce* within the general ideas expressed by Aquinas. When Edward I offers Bruce the

[14] John of Ireland, for instance, expresses a very similar conception of kingship in his instructive book for James IV, *Meroure of Wissdome* (1490):

> God that is omnipotent, þocht he be of jnfinit powere to gouerne the waurld, the hevin, the Erd, the angellis, the men and all creature and to his powere may nocht Ere in regimen and gobernacioune, Neuirtheless to gif kingis, lordis, and princis exempill hou þai suld reule and gouerne þar pepill committit to þame, his hie maieste gouernis nocht be strethe ore fors, bot with powere rewlit be wisdome, Clemens, wertu, and beneuolence. (p. 5)

possibility of becoming King of Scots in exchange for paying fealty to him, the Earl of Carrick's speech establishes the national discourse of the romance:

> "Schyr," said he, "sa God me save
> Ye kynryk ȝharn I nocht to have
> Bot gyff it fall off rycht to me,
> And gyff God will yat it sa be
> I sall als frely in all thing
> Hald it as it afferis to king,
> Or as myn eldris forouth me
> Held it in freyast rewate."
>
> (I. 157-164)

Bruce's first words state his position and the kind of kingship he is advocating. First, he implicitly discredits Edward as the arbiter of the succession conflict by referring to God as the only one with sufficient authority to choose the rightful king. As John of Salisbury affirms, a king "is subject only to God and those who exercise His office and represent Him on earth" (*Policraticus*, book V).[15] Edward, then, has no right to nominate the

[15] In the late Middle Ages, God's approval of the monarch was more than a *locus communis*. It signified a symbolic affirmation of good kingship and rightful administration of his power. In Christine de Pizan's *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*, the narrator praises the newly crowned King of France, who had previously "been desinherited by the Treaty of Troyes, 21 May 1420" (Kennedy and Varty [ed] 1977: 61) in favour of the English Henry V:

> Or faisons feste à nostre roy!
> Que tresbien soit-il revenu!
> Resjoïz de son noble arroy,
> Alons trestous, grant et menu,
> Au devant — nul ne soit tenu —
> Menant joie le saluer,
> Louant Dieu, qui l'a maintenu,
> Criant "Noël!" En hault huer.
>
> (*Ditié* V)

The Dauphin's right to the French throne is pleaded along the lines of divine right through God's direct intervention keeping the Dauphin safe. At the same time, this rightfulness serves to unite all the people around the royal figure, who will liberate them from the English threat.

Scottish monarch. Moreover, Barbour represents the English king as a foreign coloniser who aims to subjugate and oppress the country and, consequently, as totally inadequate for the role. Secondly, he defends the autonomy of the kingdom and its monarch against any foreign subjugation or, in the case of Edward I, abuse and aggression. Finally, he refers to the old ancestry of rulers in Scotland, which, on being intimately related to the notion of tradition, legitimises the above-mentioned autonomy. Therefore, in his first declaration, the hero sets up the basis for future government of the country.[16] Although his plans for the nation are not already defined, his apostrophe of national independence based on divine and racial premises would have been very appealing to his audience.[17]

In the Arthurian romance tradition in Scotland, both in *Sir Lancelot of the Laik* and in *Golagros and Gawane*, Arthur and Golagros advance similar views on kingship and national autonomy to *The Bruce*. In the Scottish *Lancelot*, Arthur's answer to Galiot's envoy when the British King is asked to submit his kingdom to a superior force is closely constructed along the lines of the *locus communis* of regal discourse in the late Middle Ages:

> "Schir knycht, your lorde wondir hie pretendis
> When he to me sic salutatioune sendis;

[16] "In the figure of Bruce, Barbour creates a model of the good king or ruler. As the narrative unfolds, Bruce exhibits by turn the many qualities essential to his position — strength and courage in battle, wisdom and prudence in the maintenance of the realm, generosity, courtesy, and compassion towards his subjects, and personal honor, integrity and devoutness. More important than any single aspect of his character as Barbour repeatedly emphasizes, is Bruce's ideal combination or balance of virtues." (Ebin 1971-72: 222)

[17] One of the poet's main goals was that the romance served as an example to the courtly Scottish audience of his time: "the weak nobles at Robert II's court in the mid 1370s are imaginatively returned to the example set by the predecessors at the turn of the fourteenth century" (Jack and Rozendaal [ed] 1997: 2 [note]). Hence, the emphasis needs to be placed on the national element.

For I as yit, in tymys that ar gone,

Held never lond excep of God alone

Nore never thinkith til erthly lord to yef

Trybut nor rent, als long as I may lef."

(ll. 559-64)

What makes this response significantly exceptional is that, as Gray claims, out of the many different versions of the *Prose Lancelot* which she examined, she did not find "one which can be confidently accepted as the exact version from which the poem is translated" (Gray [ed] 1912: xiv). From my own research, I can support Gray's statement. Both the cyclic and non-cyclic *Lancelot du Lac* relate this episode in fewer words than the Scottish text. In Kennedy's edition of the non-cyclic romance, these are Arthur's words:

> "Biaus sire, fait li rois, ge ne tign onques terre de nului fors de Deu, ne ja de cestui ne la tandrai." (p. 264)

In the cyclic text edited by Sommer, spelling differences are the only ones which can be appreciated:

> "biax sire fait li rois ie ne ting onques terre de nului fors de dieu. ne ia chestui ne la tendrai." (III. 202)

Both the non-cyclic and the cyclic *Lancelot* just allude to the divine origin of kingship, but do not refer to the ancestry of the lineage. This is an amplification of the *makar*. The Scottish poet, then, adds an element which his audience could easily be identified as being of significant political relevance to the Scottish state, the parentage of the Stuarts as heirs of the Canmores. At the same time, it is reasonable to assume that at least some of the listeners, who may be familiar with the Scottish national poem of the time par

excellence, *The Bruce*, will analogically connect Bruce's and Arthur's situations at this juncture. The arguments employed by the legendary British king echo those used by Bruce: each is in favour of the sovereignty of his land, whose ruler should pay fealty to God alone, and also problematise the tension of being under the menace of a foreign superior power. This permits the *makar* to place Arthur in a favourable position before his audience despite the fact that they will soon realise that his attitude is not the ideal one for a king.

Thus, notwithstanding the obvious thematic differences between the two works, their starting points parallel the critical state of a kingdom endangered by the imperialistic ambitions of a militarily superior rival. This tension will create, among other things, the perfect atmosphere in which to debate the mechanisms of kingship at different levels: for Bruce, it will be a process of learning the way in which a king should act, whereas, for Arthur, it will be a question of recovering the old policies he has forgotten.

In the other Arthurian romance, *Golagros and Gawane*, it is again Golagros's sovereignty over his lands that is challenged (in this poem, Arthur himself is the aggressor):[18]

> "If I, for obeisance or boist, to bondage me bynde,
> I war wourthy to be
> Hingit heigh on ane tre,
> That ilk creature might se,
> To waif with the wynd.
> "Bot savand my senyeoury fra subjectioun,
> And my lordscip unlamyt, withoutin legiance,

[18] Alexander asserts that "Arthur is aggressive and appears to be unable to sympathise with Golagros's need to preserve his independence." (Alexander 1975: 31)

All that I can to yone King, cumly with croun,
I sall preif all my pane to do hym plesance,
Baith with body and beild, bowsum and boun,
Hym to mensk on mold, withoutin manance.
Bot nowthir for his senyeoury, nor for his summoun,
Na for dreid of na dede, na for na distance,
I will noght bow me ane bak for berne that is borne.
Quhill I may my wit wald,
I think my fredome to hald,
As my eldaris of ald
Has done me beforne."

(ll. 436-53)

Golagros' arguments are the same as those deployed by Bruce in *The Bruce* and Arthur in *Lancelot of the Laik*. His domains are threatened without any apparent reason other than the invader's obsession with power. In this text, the disposition of the narrative transforms Arthur's justifiable attack on the Riche Soudoyer, who has imprisoned Gyflet fis Do, into an unlawful menace to national liberty only grounded on Arthur's arbitrary and senselessly aggressive attitude. This emphasises the Scottish reference by representing a situation analogous to the Anglo-Scottish tension of the late Middle Ages.[19] Furthermore, in contrast with the *First Continuation*, in which the name of the stronghold itself, *Chastel Orguelleus*, presupposes Arthur's role as an eradicator of sin, in the Scottish poem the castle is not given any name at all. Therefore, the two chivalric and

[19] This relocation of the narrative axis is also noted by Barron: "despite the origins of its material *Golagrus and Gawain* is undeniably an organic whole, rooted in character and making its appeal to the imagination on an acceptable human level. In all these respects it is entitled to the credit of an original creation." (Barron 1974: 185)

religious requirements which justify Arthur's military intervention are obliterated by the *makar* owing to his general tenets.

Tonally, Arthur's opponent, Golagros, intermingles dramatic love of his land with an understanding of his duty. He asserts that if he gave himself into subjection, he would deserve to be hanged (ll. 436-439) and, despite Arthur's menace, he is determined to hold his territories freely according to his refined sense of *cortesia*. In just fifteen lines, then, Golagros proves to be an excellent ruler who combines his duty towards his subjects with the necessary *cortesia* and refinement a lord is supposed to possess.[20] His image contrasts with that of Arthur in all respects: he wants to impose martial superiority regardless of right and law. Historically, on the one hand, "at a level at which the Scottish audience can see him sharing the political ethics of the hated Edward I" (Jack 1974-75: 11); spiritually, on the other, both Arthur and Edward have relinquished a pilgrimage or a crusade with the purpose of enlarging their material possessions.[21] This attitude places them in an even more indefensible position both in the romance and in the eyes of the audience.[22] Golagros' *cortesia* together with his intelligent use of rhetoric serve to persuade the listeners about his right to be the ruler of these lands: "the hearers

[20] Kelly also notes that "Golagros is portrayed as an honorable, peace-loving individual forced by an outsider's greed into a struggle for supremacy." (Kelly 1975: 252)

[21] In *The Bruce*, in a fictitious episode elaborated by Barbour, Edward is said to have abandoned a crusade to get hold of Scotland: "Yat [Edward] was yan in ye haly land / On Saracenys warrayand." (I. 139-140). In a parallel situation, in *Golagros and Gawane*, Arthur completes his pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre as quickly as he can to come back to conquer Golagros' lands.

[22] As a member of the Order of Chivalry, a knight's most sacred role in life would be to defend the Christian faith and to recover the Holy Sepulchre. In the Catalan prose romance (*novel·la de cavalleries*) *Tirant lo Blanc*, this ideology is taken to the extreme to highlight Tirant's piety. While the Arabs attempt to invade England, Tirant is the main hero who helps the English realm to defeat the heathen. Similarly, in the French, *Le Chevalierie de Ogier de Danemarche*, Ogier promises to go to the Holy Sepulchre:

> "Dex! dist li dux, par vos digne comant,
> Car m'i menés, par itel convenant
> Que véoir puisse Beneoit le vaillant,
> Et sain et sauf m'ostés de cest tormant:
> Vos chevaliers serai tot mon vivant,
> Mer passerai en sef ou en calant,
> A Saint-Sépulcre et à Jérusalem."
> (ll. 6433-39)

themselves become the instruments of proof when emotion is stirred in them by the speech; for we give our judgements in different ways under the influence of joy, of liking or of hatred" (Aristotle's *Rhetoric* I.ii.5).[23] In *Golagros and Gawane*, then, it is the oppressor, Arthur, who will have to learn to be a good monarch again. The exercise of his *privata voluntas*, leading to a pernicious conception of kingship, supersedes the idea of *Rex imago Dei* — the attitude which should be expected from a Christian sovereign according to medieval philosophers including John of Salisbury and Aquinas.

In *The Wallace*, owing to the absence of a monarch, these same concepts are introduced in a different manner. Hary, instead of amalgamating the figures of Robert Bruce and his grandfather, only refers to Bruce as one of the competitors for the Scottish crown: "Off quhilk thre com Bruce, Balȝoune and Hastyng" (I. 47).[24] In this way, he avoids contradictions with history and *The Bruce* at once. In Hary's romance, the one who repudiates the country's submission to Edward is not one of the three nobles in the debate but the Bishop of Glasgow:

> Byschope Robert, in his tyme full worthi,
>
> Off Glaskow lord, he said that "we deny

[23] The use of rhetoric, however, is not an exclusive attribute of heroes: in the Anglo-Norman *Vie du Prince Noir*, the author presents a very skilfully rhetorical *controversia* in the form of letters between Henry, the Bastard, and Edward, the Black Prince. First, Henry encloses a very courteous letter to the Prince, defending his right to the Castilian throne (ll. 2404-2435): the language of *cortesia* and the careful use of rhetoric in the High Style may persuade the unsuspecting reader that he is the rightful monarch. In response to Henry's argument, the Black Prince elaborates an equally courteous and highly stylised rhetorical letter based upon irrefutable feudal and legal rights in the late Middle Ages (ll. 2909-2950), whose outcome is the representation of Edward not only as a courteous but also as a highly educated prince. In the French *Chanson de Bertrand de Guesclin*, on the opposite ideological side, the Black Prince is said to join King Pedro because of his pride: "Quant li princes l'oÿ, li cuer li engroissie / Hardement le rassault et Urgueil le deffie" (ll. 11578-79).

[24] Goldstein also remarks that at a time when the Brucean ideology was completely assimilated in Scotland, Hary paid even less attention to legal accuracy than Barbour. (Goldstein 1993: 234)

Ony our-lord bot the great god abuff."

(I. 65-67)

At a time when there was not a clear royal figure to withstand the English king, the author significantly chooses one of the leading members of the Church to gather support for the national independence of Scotland against a foreign intervention. Not only does Hary underline the role of the clergy in the Wars of Independence, but he also elucidates the above-mentioned close relationship between the Church and the King and its importance in Hary's construction of Scottish identity:

> The Church could be a formidable support to the royal authority, since it was to the crown that the church always looked for protection. Monasteries were important landowners; bishops were men of education and served often as officials in the royal government. Without the church, most of the developments in royal government would have been impossible. (Webster 1997: 34-35)

Some forty lines later, Balliol is deposed and Edward nominates himself "Roy full ryk" (I. 120). At this critical moment, Hary alludes to the mythological origins of Scotland to legitimise the nation's autonomy according to tradition.

The croune he [Edward] tuk apon that sammyne stane
At Galados send with his sone fra Spane,
Quhen Iber Scot fyrst in-till Irland come.
At Canmor syne king Fergus has it nome,
Brocht it till Scwne and stapill maid it thar,
Quhar kingis was cround viii hundyr ȝer and mar

Befor the tyme at king Eduuard it fand.

(I. 121-27)

In the later Middle Ages the symbolism and mythology of a nation's origins, as well as being one of the touchstones of the formation of national consciousness, also constituted a justification of legitimacy and sovereignty. Hence, as soon as the English monarch took effective possession of the government, Hary negates Edward I's right on the grounds of mythological history and tradition.[25]

All four narratives, *The Bruce, The Wallace, Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane*, deal with the representation of good kingship along the lines proposed by Aquinas. In developing this conception, the authors refer to the conflict of a nation's autonomy threatened by an external aggressor, the shared components of identity and of the national and dynastic discourse. This places a particular emphasis on the Scottish political realities of the time.

In the context of the French *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* (late fourteenth century), the debate on possible submission to the enemy is treated in a very different way from that found in the Scottish romances. When the Duke of Lancaster asks Bertrand (not a king, but a national leader nonetheless) to join the Anglo-Normans in return for "terre et gant avoir" (l. 1897), Bertrand's respond is devoid of the dramatic and solemn gravity of the Scottish texts. While in the Scottish romances the national and the

[25] The Declaration of Arbroath also refers to the mythological origins of Scotland in order to claim its independence:

> We learn from the deeds and records of the men of old, that among peoples of renown our Scottish people have been distinguished by many tributes to their fame. Passing from Greater Scythia over the Tyrrhenian Sea and by the pillars of Hercules, abiding for long courses of time in Spain among the fiercest of warriors, by none how barbaric soever could they be anywhere brought under the yoke. And thence coming, twelve hundred years after the setting forth of the people of Israel, they won for themselves by victory after victory and travail upon travail the abodes in the west which now they hold, the Britons expelled, the Picts utterly destroyed, assailed again and again by Norseman, Dane and Angle; and this is their home, as the histories of the ancients bear witness, they kept evermore free from any servitude. (Dickinson *et al.* [ed] 1952-53: I.132)

personal enterprises cannot be detached from each other, in the French text the personal fealty of Bertrand and national identity are not necessarily the same thing:

> "Sire, ce dit Bertran, foy que doy Saint Remy!
> Se tant premierement vous avoie servi,
> Tenir me devriez vo mortel ennemi
> S'a un autre seigneur je m'estoie parti."
>
> (ll. 1899-902)

Although Bertrand's words imply a refusal to submit to another lord together with an affirmation of his loyalty to the French sovereign, the hero's language is that of *cortesia*. This stylistic device is even more evident if the Duke's reaction is analysed: "Quant li dux vit Bertran parler si sagement, / En son cuer le prisa le duc moult grandement" (ll. 1909-10). This likely historical scene is fictionalised along the lines of the courtly tradition. The assertion of Bertrand's nationalistic and royalist dialectics is redefined in the context of chivalric attitudes and behaviour. The effect of this formal disposition, albeit equally appealing, demonstrates a set of implications other than those of the Scottish romances. As inheritor of the rich and old tradition of *chansons* and *romans courtois*, the French author has no qualms in applying notions of chivalry and *cortesia* even in these overtly political scenes. Conversely, while coming from a French-influenced background, the Scottish authors prefer to make use of less ornamented courtly language and attitudes when themes concerning Scotland's political situation are debated.

The Need for Freedom and National Identity

As previously argued, the pre-eminence of freedom in these texts interweaves with, and sometimes becomes impossible to dissociate from, the need for the good exercise of kingship. In the context of Barbour's *Bruce* and Hary's *Wallace,* the theme of national liberty is traditionally regarded as the main concern and leitmotiv of the romances. In the Arthurian texts, although the term nationalism would not completely apply to the mythological world of the Matter of England, the autonomy of a lord or a king's territories in front of a foreign invasion is one of the key subjects in *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane*. This analysis will elucidate the concrete meaning(s) and implications of liberty in the narrative literature of late medieval Scotland.

In *The Bruce*, the apostrophe of national freedom has been traditionally regarded to be at the core of the romances. This customary approach is the one taken by Utz in his article "If Freedom Fail,... Freedom in John Barbour's *The Bruce*."[26] Nevertheless, during the last few years, this vision has been challenged by theories along the lines of cultural materialism such as Goldstein's, whose book *The Matter of Scotland* attests that freedom as expressed by Barbour only includes the upper classes and not everybody. To support his claim, Goldstein relies on a line of historical argumentation and contemporary literary theory. The antagonising views of the two authors will be used to investigate the sense of liberty in Barbour's work.

The different definitions of freedom given in the *Middle English Dictionary* (Kurath *et al.* [ed] 1952-: III. 874-76) and in the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (Craigie *et al.* [ed] 1931-2002: V. 562-63) can be summarised as follows:

1.- National independence.

[26] Utz, H. "If Freedom Fail,... Freedom in John Barbour's *The Bruce*." *English Studies* 50 (1969) : 151-165.

2.- Class or group (such as a guild) privilege.

3.- Personal freedom.

4.- The participation of citizens in a nation's political affairs.

Utz claims that the four distinct meanings of freedom are represented at different stages in the narrative. He postulates that the most famous passage of the romance, Barbour's apostrophe to freedom, "makes it clear that independence (1) is asserted against a foreign invader" (Utz 1969: 154):

A, fredome is a noble thing,
Fredome mays man to haiff liking,
Fredome all solace to man giffis,
He levys at es yat frely levys.
A noble hart may haiff nane es
Na ellys nocht yat may his ples
Gyff fredome failȝhe, for fre liking
Is ȝharnyt our all oyer thing.

(I. 225-32)

Utz also suggests the presence of meaning "personal freedom" in these lines. Douglas' adherence to Bruce's party in order to avenge himself on the English and recover his lands is seen as the defence of "class privilege" (Utz 1969: 156). He goes on to argue that external pressure led to Scottish patriotism. This is reflected in the poem as sense "personal freedom." Finally, the participation of the common folk in the Scottish fight for independence is regarded as the citizen's participation in political issues. He recognises this latter sense gradually restricts "class privilege" as the story develops (Utz 1969: 159).

Although I basically agree with Utz's arguments on the whole, I would like to refine his analysis of the four meanings of freedom. First of all, "national freedom" is the predominant sense all through the poem. In so far as Barbour's main ideological discourse corresponds to Scotland's fight for independence, the other three senses should be fully understood only when contrasted with the former. As Daiches asserts, when John Barbour exhorts freedom, he is primarily concerned with the independence of the realm (Daiches 1977: 8, 10 in Barrow 1979: 18). This does not negate the existence of the other meanings, but suggests that the other three depend on the first one in the *makar's* textual and political composition of the text.

"Class privilege" does not seem to be restricted by the meaning regarding the participation of citizens' in the country's affairs. In fact, the intervention of the common folk in *The Bruce* does not suggest his involvement in political matters. The *Middle English Dictionary* defines this meaning more concretely that Utz. Literally, the dictionary refers to "the body of citizens forming the corporation of a city or town" (Kurath *et al.* [ed] 1952-: III. 876). This envisages a body exercising political action in a determined area. Hence, the common folk's intervention in battle can hardly be catalogue under this sense. Rather they make use of their free "liking" (I. 226) to support the national cause.

Then, it not "the citizens' participation in the Scottish political life" what restricts "class privilege." Rather it is sense one, the nobles and Third Estate's communion with the "nation's independence." William Douglas is the perfect illustration of this conceptual evolution during the narrative. It is true that his first steps in the romance are led by his wish to recover his father's properties:

> Ye bischop led him to ye king [Edward I]

And said, "Schyr heyr I to 3ow bryng
Yis child [Douglas] yat clemys 3our man to be,
And prays 3ow par cheryte
yat 3e resave her his homage
And grantis him his heritage."

(I. 415-20)

At the beginning of *The Bruce,* then, James Douglas, second only to Robert Bruce as a hero, is disposed to submit to Scotland's greatest enemy, Edward I, in return for his possessions.[27] Douglas articulates an eminently feudal discourse: he merely defends his individual/class interests. Inasmuch as his only concerns are personal, for him the national struggle is nothing else than a means to accomplish his objective, never an end in itself. Although he behaves according to an *international* noble code of conduct in a manner appropriate to his hierarchical position, he leaves aside the particularities of Scotland.

Again, when he joins Robert Bruce, he is only motivated by the intention of recovering his lands at first, not by Bruce's defence of the interests of Scotland:

And Iames off Dowglas preuely
Said to ye byschop, "Schyr 3e se
How Inglis-men throw yar powste
Dysherysys me off my land,
And men has gert 3ow wnderstand
Als yat ye erle off Carryk

[27] This passage also serves to portray the origins of James Douglas' confrontation with Edward I and, at the same time, it parallels Bruce's first argument with the King of England (I. 154-167). In both cases, Douglas and Bruce stand for what they think is right to defend (possessions and the freedom of Scotland respectively), whereas Edward I is characterised as the tyrannical aggressor who causes the confrontation.

Clamys to govern ye kynryk,

[...]

Yarfor schir giff it war 3our will

I wald tak with him gud & ill.

Throw hym I trow my land to wyn

Magre ye Clyffurd and his kyn."

(II. 98-104 / 109-12)

McKim claims that the relationship between Douglas and Bruce is that of "remunerative recognition of service proffered" in exchange for Douglas's loyalty (McKim 1981: 169). Nonetheless, by becoming a man of Bruce, he also becomes a supporter of his cause: the liberation of the realm.[28] Although as a nobleman he continues to persevere with the idea of recovering his properties, he progressively attaches more importance to the national struggle than to his class privileges.

The first instance in which this shift becomes evident is found in Book VIII. 15-73: Douglas and his men attack Sir Philip Mowbray and his troop, because they were looking for Robert Bruce to kill him. Douglas places Bruce's security and cause before his own. There is a progression from the personal to the national reflected in his conduct. He comes to identify with Bruce's cause (the liberation of Scotland, freedom sense 1) leaving his own ambitions in the background, though not forgetting them. The *makar* was completely aware of his knightly audience; for this reason, if Bruce's image serves as an example of good kingship, that of Douglas illustrates the attitude that the Scottish nobility listening to the romance should adopt towards their king and their country.

[28] As in the English romances: "conflict between a hero and his society is not central and problematic. Rather than locating the human drama in self-discovery, the insular romances propose that the human drama is collective, a communal search for stability that takes place through the hero's search." (Crane 1986: 83)

Goldstein approaches the poem from a diametrically opposed perspective from that of Utz. He refutes the assumption that freedom in *The Bruce* refers to everybody's liberty: "when Barbour praises freedom, [...] he makes no concession to the interests of unfree Scottish subjects." For him, this concept only concerns "the Community of the Realm of Scotland," that is, "the highest strata of Scottish society" (Goldstein 1993: 164). Hence, the exhortation: "A, fredome is a noble thing" should be interpreted as freedom is something exclusively for the nobility: "Past readers have neglected to consider the literal meaning of the word "noble" here, though the poet's presentation of Edward's violation of property rights gives us every reason to take Barbour at his word" (Goldstein 1993: 163). To draw such a conclusion, as well as referring to the loss of property of the members of the upper classes, Goldstein also alludes to Barbour's privilege position. His main objection is that, the *makar* was one of those who took advantage of the institution of serfdom; therefore, he would have never cast doubt on its existence. Therefore, in *The Bruce*, Goldstein regards freedom only as the defence of "class privilege," dismissing the other three definitions, above all national and personal liberty.

Although I agree with several of the ideas proposed by Goldstein, I do not share his position with regard to freedom in *The Bruce*. As he states, Barbour, as an archdeacon and a poet at court, obviously profited from the institution of serfdom. Nonetheless, in my opinion, the *makar* was also within his rights to praise the pre-eminence of freedom for everybody, no matter to which social strata they belong. One thing need not necessarily exclude the other. Neither can Barbour be branded as a hypocrite when he praises freedom, and, at the same time, has serfs working for him. It would be convenient to distinguish between Barbour, the Archdeacon, a member of the Community of the Realm, and Barbour, the *makar*. To this statement, Goldstein would probably

answer that, on interpreting a work of art, it would be a naïve mistake to limit its analysis to the purely literary aspects. To understand a text completely, the social and historical elements surrounding it must also be taken into account (Goldstein 1993: 151-153). Therefore, it is necessary to discuss the poem from the historical context to support my arguments.

Historically, in the late Middle Ages, the personal freedom of Scottish subjects was to be respected within the limitations of their vows of loyalty to lords. The oath of loyalty presupposed certain obligations on the part of the lords, too:

> A de pareilles précisions, d'ailleurs, un devoir de protection se prêtait moins bien que des services. "Envers et contre toute créature qui vive ou qui meurt," l'homme sera défendu par son seigneur. Dans ses corps, d'abord et surtout. Dans ses biens aussi et plus particulièrement dans ses fiefs. De ce protecteur, en outre, devenu, nous le verrons, un juge, il attend bonne et prompte justice. (Bloch 1939: 345)

Furthermore, the particular political situation of Scotland both during the Wars of Independence and at the time the romance was composed did not discourage oppression of both class and personal liberties. Although Berlin surely refers to more contemporary conflicts, the following statement is also applicable to late medieval Scotland:

> What they [oppressed classes and nationalities] want, as often as not, is simply recognition (of their class or nation) as an independent source of human activity, as an entity with a will of its own, intending to act in accordance with it [...] and not to be ruled, educated, guided, with however light a hand, as being not quite fully human and therefore not quite fully free. (Berlin 1958: 41-42)

In *The Bruce*, both the upper classes and the Third Estate would constitute the "oppressed classes and nationalities." The English deprived the Scottish nobility of their institutions and also of their possessions, if they did not submit to Edward I. They also abused their authority and exploited the lower classes. If Barbour's highlighting of the "common folk" is united together with Berlin's assertion, the only possible conclusion is that the praise of freedom in *The Bruce* is addressed to all Scots.[29]

Textually, both shortly before and after Barbour's praise of freedom, the nobility and the peasantry are said to suffer alike owing to the English tyranny: "Thus-gat levyt yai & in sic thrillage / Bath pur and yai off hey parag" (I. 275-76). "Thus-gat" refers to the sufferings undergone by the Scots as expressed in the two previous long sections. From its purely grammatical and linguistic structure, the apostrophising of freedom included in the previous section also alludes to both the "pur" and "yai off hey parag." Barbour extols an ideal situation, in which everyone might enjoy personal as well as national freedom, in just the same terms as the Declaration of Arbroath proposes. As Jack affirms: "the hierarchical context which exacerbates this tension between ideal and actual is accepted throughout by narrator and heroes. [...] The narrator's ideal is not the destruction of that order but the perfect society in which each individual loves his brother." (Jack and Rozendaal [ed] 1997: xxvi)

In addition to this, had Barbour not wanted to include the commoners in his praise of freedom, he would not have bestowed on them such a relevant role in the liberation of the country. The representation of their active participation in the Wars of Independence

[29] "When the Narrative [Barbour's] says that the churchmen and lords chose Bruce, 'the people consenting', 'people' almost certainly refers to the commons, the intent being merely to cite the three constituents of the community. In such context 'community' is more than a convenient legal phrase and does carry authority, but the emotive force referred to reside in other words, the synonyms 'land', 'country', 'nation', 'people', 'folk', 'Scots.'" (McDiarmid 1979: 8-9)

challenges and subverts several literary and chivalric conventions.[30] Therefore, although Goldstein's arguments are strong, *The Bruce* as a unifying literary and ideological piece of art epitomises the concept of freedom on personal and national levels, not as an ethereal ideal but as the practical respect of the boundaries, duties and rights between lord and vassal. This notion operates as one of the main tools which will bring all the Scots to fight together.

The same thematic tension between selfish defence of feudal properties and national commitment is present in *The Wallace*. In this work, however, the historical circumstances at the time of composition favoured a freer treatment of the figure of Robert Bruce. McDiarmid summarises the historical climate in the following way:

> The interest of the Crown in securing a genuine treaty that would allow it to deal firmly with a difficult aristocracy was obvious, and the burgesses and more commercially minded nobles of the fifteenth century could also see their profit from it. [...] It was not surprising, therefore, that schemes of matrimonial alliance with the English royal House and even the eventual union of the crowns began to be contemplated. (McDiarmid [ed] 1968: I.xvii)

If in *The Bruce* the poet had to make use of several fictive and rhetorical strategies to silence Bruce's desertion of the national cause and adherence to the English party, the different political circumstances permit Hary to develop his Bruce in a distinct manner. While Barbour constructs Bruce as a *speculum principis*, Hary condemns first and regenerates later the figure of the King of Scots through the intervention and guidance of Wallace. As a result, the contrast between feudal and national tensions is even more

[30] This point is thoroughly discussed in chapter two.

dramatic than in Barbour's narrative, where it is the future King of Scots himself who has to reinstate his priorities.

In the early stages of the narrative, the two main pretenders to the Scottish Crown, Balliol and Bruce, are characterised as traitors to the national cause in so far as their priorities focus on personal promotion: they are differentiated only by audience awareness of Bruce's future as the liberator of Scotland. Therefore, it is only the extradiegetic competence of the listeners that places Bruce in a favourable light. They could not fail to recognise Bruce as the Elect. The audience knew Balliol would remain a traitor, whereas Bruce would eventually rejoin the national struggle and replace Wallace as Scotland's leader.

At Falkirk, when Wallace observes that Bruce is fighting on Edward's side, he makes a disheartened and severe assertion: "Allace," he said, "the warld is contrar-lik!" (XI. 210). As a champion of the national cause, Wallace finds it difficult to come to terms with such a situation: in a strange and absurd world, the theoretical leader of the nation is literally killing his subjects. This scene endorses even more the image of Wallace as a tragic hero who always has to face all kinds of adversities. Now Wallace will have to instruct Bruce on how to lead his country. As one who has lost the right way, Bruce is unable to understand Wallace's position at first: "Quhy wyrkis thow thus and mycht in gud pes be?" (XI. 457). Like Boethius in *De Consolatione,* his question reveals at once an unawareness of the situation and an attachment to mutable earthly possessions. Both need a guide to learn what they have to do. God's mysterious ways are transferred into the spiritual incapacity to comprehend the political realities of Scotland.

At this juncture, Bruce is corrupt and can see only the materiality of the world: he cannot grasp the meaning of high ideals such as national freedom or good leadership. In

his narrow vision of everything, he cannot see beyond the selfish but short-lived advantages he is offered. This symbolic blindness motivates his question: he wonders why Wallace does not want to sell his soul to the devil (Edward I) in return for material gold. Wallace's answer clearly refers to the country's urgent need far beyond personal egotism: "I cleym no rycht bot wald this land defend, / At thow wndoys throu thi fals cruell deid" (XI. 460-61). This assertion defines the tone of his reprimand and later lesson to Bruce:

> Throuch thi tresson, that suld be our rycht king,
> That willfully dystroyis thin awn off-spryng."
> [...]
> "I cleym no thing as be titill of rycht,
> Thocht I mycht reiff, sen god has lent me mycht,
> Fra the thi crowne off this regioun to wer,
> Bot I will nocht sic a charge on me ber.
> Gret god wait best quhat wer I tak on hand
> For till kep fre that thow art gaynstandand.
> It mycht beyn said off lang gone her off forn,
> In cursyt tym thow was for Scotland born.
> Schamys thow nocht that thow neuir ȝeit did gud,
> Thow renygat deuorar off thi blud?"
>
> (XI. 471-72 / 483-92)

Wallace severely reproaches the future king for his inability to come to an understanding of his country's realities and needs. His rhetorical discourse is structured and founded upon two basic themes: treason and Bruce's destiny. The hero finds the two concepts

impossible to reconcile. Bruce will now have to make an ultimate decision: his choice between English gold or Scottish loyalty can no longer be postponed.

Wallace's harsh oration makes no concessions to ambiguity. Although his words may seem rather too aggressive when talking to his king, there are three factors which justify his way of action: first, after Falkirk, the political and national stability of Scotland was hazardous; secondly, at a rhetorical level, the use of powerful and direct language is meant to move both Bruce and the audience of the romance;[31] and thirdly, at a more symbolic level, he is morally obliged to act like this in so far as he is the Elect (XI. 484-85). Therefore, the Elect, who is justified by God himself, addresses and corrects the other Elect, who is not yet aware of his *avanture*. Wallace becomes the mature father figure and teacher/guide leading Bruce (symbolically, young prodigal son and pupil) from ignorance to knowledge. Should Wallace be successful, the succession will be effective: the Guardian/leader/liberator of Scotland will be replaced by the reborn King/leader/liberator. The final image is dramatically and visually striking: "Schamys thow nocht that thow neuir ȝeit did gud, / Thow renygat deuorar of thi blud?" (XI. 491-92). "He [Wallace] reverts to the Saturnian image of the father who devours his own children" (Goldstein 1993: 246). The direct question together with the iconographic force of "thi blud" and the pertinent mythological reference are the final rhetorical devices used to teach the future sovereign. In his *History of Sexuality*, Foucault points out the emblematic significance of blood in feudal societies:

> The blood relation long remained an important element in the mechanisms of power, its manifestations, and its rituals. [...] A society of blood — I was

[31] "The angry person is always angry with the individual [...] and because the individual has done something, against the angry person or his friends. [...] It is well to reprove before we punish" (Aristotle's *Rhetoric* II.ii. 2, 15). Here, then, Wallace can be regarded as being angry owing to Bruce's attitude towards his people and country. Hence, he tries to redress his demeanour by reproving.

> tempted to say of "sanguinity" — where power spoke *through* blood: the honor of war, the fear of famine, the triumph of death, the sovereign with his sword, executioners, and torturers; blood was a *reality with a symbolic function.* (Foucault 1990: 147)[32]

The "symbolic" image of blood reappears again some lines further.[33] In the English camp, Bruce begins to have his dinner without washing his hands: "Ane said, "Behald, ȝon Scot ettis his awn blud"" (XI. 536). Edward I asks for some water for Bruce to wash his hands.

> "This blud is myn. That hurtis most my thocht."
> Sadly the Bruce than in his mind remordyt
> Thai wordis suth Wallace had him recordyt.
> Than rewyt he sar, fra resoun had him knawin
> At blud and land suld lik all beyn his awin.
> With thaim he was lang or he couth get away,
> Bot contrar Scottis he faucht nocht fra that day.
>
> (XI. 540-46)

Biblical intertextuality imposes an allegorical interpretation of Bruce not wanting to wash his hands. The Bible refers several times to sins being metaphorically forgiven by hand washing.[34] Allegorically, Bruce realises that no matter how much he washes his hands,

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[32] Goldstein also refers to Foucault in his analysis of blood in *The Wallace*. (Goldstein 1993: 232)

[33] Blood is a persistent image throughout the narrative. According to Goldstein, its presence is never gratuitous: "the vivid presentation of gore to satisfy the audience's desire for revenge seems to occur in proportion to the scale of the English aggressors' provocation" (Goldstein 1993: 224). He concludes that "Blood is endowed a symbolic significance that is truly remarkable for a poem that is not expressly about Christ." (Goldstein 1993: 232)

[34] In *Deu.* 21: 6-8, for instance, "[...] all the elders of that city nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley; and they shall testify, 'Our hands did not shed this blood, neither did our eyes see it shed. Forgive, O Lord, they people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and set not the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of thy people Israel; but let the guilt of blood be forgiven them.'"

he will never clear from his conscience all the Scottish blood he has already spilled. Like Lady MacBeth is Shakespeare's play, innocent blood will forever besmirch his hands. Bruce will no longer remain inactive and blind towards his nation and his people. He does not and will not accept Edward's *water* again. Nothing which might be offered by the English monarch will buy his loyalty any more. He sincerely adheres to the national cause to defend all his subjects and to liberate the country "At [that of every single Scot seems to be implied] blud and land suld all lik beyn his awin" (XI. 544). Bruce starts to see his country as part of himself, with him as the head and the rest of society as the body. In the traditional association of society with the body, the members exist interdependently. For its perfect functioning, all of them must be harmoniously complemented:

> The place of the head in the body of the commonwealth is filled by the prince. [...] The place of the heart is filled by the Senate, which initiates good works and ill. The duties of the eyes, ears, and tongue are claimed by the judges and governors of provinces. Officials and soldiers correspond to the hands. [...] Financial officers and keepers are compared to the stomach and the intestines. [...] The husbandmen correspond to the feet. (*Policraticus*, Book V)

Wallace's rhetoric has been effective: as his power begins to decline, the national cause is perpetuated and renewed in the figure of Robert Bruce.[35] Their final reconciliation takes place in their next meeting: "'Wallace," said Bruce, " [...] rabut me now no mar. / Myn awin dedis has bet me wondyr sar.'" (XI. 595-96). This serves to restore the natural order "with the subject kneeling [XI. 596-97] before his rightful king,

[35] The authorial intention is manifest: the opposition to the English should last forever. Every national leader should be substituted by another who can keep this sentiment alive.

a fitting resolution to the topos of the world turned upside down" (Goldstein 1993: 246). In fact, this is also a reversal of a *locus communis* of epic poetry, in which there is a conflict between the king and the hero:

> It is the business of the king to maintain his dominion. [...] If the only way to do this is to sacrifice his property or his life, he must do so. The hero, on the other hand, is under no such restraint. Whatever his social rank, even if he is the son of a king, he has no responsibility for the society into which he intrudes. He has only one object, the establishment of his own reputation. (Jackson 1982: 12)

Therefore, as Douglas in Barbour's narrative, the Bruce in Hary's text evolves from the personal to the national. Like in *The Bruce*, "class privilege" is superseded by freedom the liberty of a nation. Despite this similar treatment, Hary adumbrates this progression from a more elaborately rhetorical framework than his predecessor. While the evolution of Barbour's Douglas is one of political awareness, that of Hary's Bruce is an internalised process of self-realisation. This might also be motivated by the different epochs in which they were written. The archdeacon of Aberdeen composed *The Bruce* at an early period when he had very few Scots rhetorical models to follow, whereas Hary, as a contemporary of the greatest *makars* in the golden age of Scottish medieval literature, did have those vernacular rhetorical models Barbour lacked. "Such rhetoric as Walter Bower cultivates in his *Scotichronicon* and such strongly imagined creations as Hary's Wallace or Henryson's Cresseid are quite alien to Barbour's time" (McDiarmid and Stevenson [ed] 1981-85: I. 51).

In Wallace's final renunciation of the guardianship, once the continuation of the national struggle has symbolically been handed on to Bruce, the hero still expresses the same concern with national freedom:

> "Gud men," he said, "I was 3our gouernour.
> My mynd was set to do 3ow ay honour
> And for to bryng this Realm to rychtwysnas.
> For It I passit in mony paynfull place.
> To wyn our awin my self I neui spard.
> At the Fawkyrk thai ordand me Reward.
> Off that reward 3e her no mor throu me.
> To sic gyftis god will full weill haiff E.
>
> (XI. 763-70)

The tragic hero's words return to Hary's main theme. The tired Wallace provides a sacrificial example, pointing to the kind of altruism his fellow nobles should show in serving Scotland's cause. The defeated Wallace of history is re-constructed as an invincible hero, whose renunciation of the guardianship is not the anticlimactic speech of a vanquished knight but rather a triumphant oration in favour of national freedom. Of course, the pseudo-sacred figure of Hary's Wallace knows that such an unselfish disposition will be rewarded in heaven. Again, the Wars of Independence against the English are elevated to sacred territory.

Barbour and Hary posit the national and individual consequences of foreign invasion through the occupation of Scotland. In Book I of *The Bruce*, the author explains the barbarities of the English in Scotland, the way in which they abuse power and the

defenceless position of his kinsmen. The poet suggests that, together with the Scots' lack of freedom on the national level, they are also deprived of any kind of human dignity. This can only be recovered by means of a fair government applying justice correctly. This point is even clearer when the famous apostrophising of freedom (which has already been mentioned) is contextualised.

After deposing Balliol, Edward I hastens to occupy and oppress Scotland. His proceedings are rapid and effective, which tacitly implies that the occupation responds to a premeditated plan. The rapidity with which the invasion takes place confirms Barbour's suspicions in I. 91-110 when King Edward I is chosen as the arbiter of the succession to the Scottish Throne.[36] The same humiliations suffered by the Welsh and Irish are going to be faced by the Scots. The English offensive is systematic. First, the English troops take all the strongholds: "Sa hale yat bath castell & toune / War in-till his possessioune" (I. 185-86). This ensures the control of the country and makes resistance impossible. Subsequently, Edward bestows all the important public positions on Englishmen " [...] for to gowern land afferis / He maid off Inglis nation" (I. 192-93). After taking these two steps, Edward has the dominance of Scotland.

Fanon's comments on colonial Africa are also applicable to the Scottish situation as denounced by Barbour:

> The colonial world is a world divided into two. The dividing line, the frontiers, are shown by barracks and police stations. In the colonies it is the policeman and the soldier who are the official, the instituted go-between, the spokesmen of the settler and his rule. (Fanon 1980: 29)

[36] "To present the dispute over the succession as a conflict of freedom and thraldom, Barbour considerably alters the history of 1286-98. In the first place, Scotland was not helpless in 1286 as Barbour suggests. Six guardians, appointed less than a month after Alexander's death by a convention at Scone, ruled in the name of the king's lawful heir, the infant Margaret of Norway." (Ebin 1971-72: 226)

Scots can no longer confront the English militarily (the latter possess the strongholds) or legally (the reins of power are in English hands, too). Barbour's nationalistic and dynastic discourse becomes prominent here. Those referred to as English are not only the lords or soldiers who were born in England, but anyone either from England or Scotland supporting Edward I, whereas Scots are only those who fight with and for Robert Bruce. This distinction will be maintained during the rest of the narrative. A symptomatic example is that of Sir Ingram Umphraville, who is first called English at the beginning of the romance; then, when he joins Bruce, Umphraville is regarded as Scottish. Finally he is considered English again on his leaving Robert I's court for that of Edward II.

When presenting his initial account of English tyranny in *The Wallace*, Hary contrasts the heroes and the villains. Nevertheless, the distinction is different from that drawn in *The Bruce*: the opposition is between the English invaders and the "trew Scottis" whom Edward " [...] gert sla hastely / Off man and wiff vii thousand and fyfty" (I. 93-94).[37] This allows for a more dramatic and hideous representation of unloyal Scots: "Whereas Barbour avoids calling Bruce's Scottish opponents "Scots" insofar as that is possible, Blind Hary does not hesitate to present Amer as both Scottish and traitor" (Goldstein

[37] In Cuvelier's *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, the hero's attitude to traitors to France is clearly established:

> "Vous qui estes Englois d'Engleterre nouri,
> Vous paierés ranson, que ne soiés oci.
> Mais li François qui sont laiens avecques ti
> Et qui ont renoié le bon duc de Berry,
> Je vous jure sur Dieu, qui oncques ne menti,
> Touz pendre les feray a un arbre feuilli,"
> (ll. 21879-84)

Bertrand makes a clear distinction between the English and the French. The latter, as traitors to their king, will not be pardoned, but their execution might serve as an example for any other French whose loyalty could be doubtful. In the *Chanson*, there is not possible redemption for the traitor no matter to what social class she or he may belong. On the contrary, in *The Bruce* and in *The Wallace* some national conspirators are treated in very different ways. In *The Wallace*, it is Robert Bruce himself who is allowed to find the *right way*, whereas in *The Bruce* Scottish serving the English either nobles or plain soldiers are permitted to rejoin the national cause.

1993: 248). In the more combative and Anglophobic language of *The Wallace*, the specific demeanour of "traitors" enhances the virulence of the nationalistic message.

In the lines following the submission of Scotland, both poets relate and denounce the demeanour of the English towards the defenceless people of Scotland. In *The Bruce*, they are accused of doing whatever they please: they rape women and their daughters (I. 199-200) and steal all the things the want (I. 208-210). Similarly in *The Wallace*,

> Both wiffis, wedowis, thai tuk all at thar will,
> Nonnys, madyns, quham thai likit to spill.
> King Herodis part thai playit in-to Scotland
> Off ȝong childyr that thai befor thaim fand.
>
> (I. 163-66)

Thus, they oppress the Scottish community in every possible manner: on physical, psychological and economic levels.[38] Hary incorporates a typological comparison with Herod with which he intensifies the horror occasioned by the English. The allegorical correspondences of the war against the invaders as a holy enterprise are also established. At the same time, he denounces the English behaviour in a chivalric society since "Offici de cavayler és mantenir vilves, òrfens, hòmens despoderats; cor enaixí con és custuma e

[38] As Goldstein remarks, "medieval historians of war often employed the topos of savage behavior toward women and children" (Goldstein 1993: 161). A good illustration of this is the French *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, in which the author condemns the similar sorts of savage proceedings on the part of the English aiming at the same political and literary purposes:

> Ainci devant Paris se tint Robin Canole,
> Qui ces Englois semont de mal faire et escole.
> Ly uns ocist un prestre a son col son estole,
> Et li autre ou moustier par sa foleur desole,
> Li tiers par sa folleur les pucelles viole,
> Et li cars par jehaine un prodonme affole;
> A mal faire pluseurs s'i mirent la en mole.
>
> (ll. 18574-80)

rahó que los majors ajuden a deffendre los menors" (Llull 1988: 181).[39] Insofar as the English knights are doing harm to those who they should more considerately respect, their conduct can only fall into the category of bad knighthood. Hary's accusation works at two different levels, then, the typological one, related to sacred history, and the chivalric one, connected with the techniques of the *roman courtois* tradition.

The thematic strategies of *The Wallace* and *The Bruce* include a portrayal of the intervention of ecclesiastical institutions in the Wars of Independence. In *The Wallace*, for example, the author devotes some lines to the enemies' atrocities committed against the properties of the Church to conclude that "Thai tuk in hand of thar achybyschops haile" (I. 168). Then, both Hary and Barbour denounce the loss of the secular institutions of power and the English appropriation of the centres of faith. This double seizure threatens both Scotland's survival as a nation and its identity, which was so closely associated with King and Church.

The worst thing of all, however, is that the Scots cannot even defend their rights. Barbour tells us twice in twelve lines what happens if anybody dares to protest (ll. 203-204 and 210-212): the invaders would find — or invent, if necessary — any reason to deprive them of their land or life, or else, they would live in misery. The logical conclusion to this makes explicit reference to legal mechanisms of justice: "For yai dempt yaim efter yar will, / Takand na kep to rycht na skill" (I. 213-14). There is an implicit demand which goes beyond national or individual freedom. Barbour clamours for the necessity of equity, which would permit the inhabitants of Scotland to live with dignity. The kind of legal impartiality expressed in these lines can only be recovered through the good administration of government. This is what Bruce is offering to his subjects.

[39] In Haye's translation: "office of knychthede is to mantene and defend wedowis, maidenis, faderles and moderles barnis, and pore miserable personis and piteable, and to help the wayke agayne the star". (Haye 1901-14: II. 27).

The next passage is the one focussing on the praise of freedom: the most frequently quoted section of *The Bruce*. However, when it is cited in anthologies, the quotation tends to begin with I. 225: "A, fredome is a noble thing", not mentioning the previous six lines, which again stress the pre-eminence of justice:

> [Alas] yat folk yat euer wes fre,
> And in fredome wount for to be,
> Throw yar gret myschance and foly
> War tretyt yan so wykkytly
> Yat yar fais yar iugis war,
> Quhat wrechitnes may man have mar.
>
> (I. 219-24)

Immediately after the exposition of the English cruelty and subjugation of Scotland, the beginning of the famous apostrophe to freedom is introduced and related to the lack of equality in the framework of law. Barbour highlights the need for justice to safeguard freedom. In this milieu, equity can only be interpreted, not as an ideal, but through its everyday application according to the mechanisms of royal power. Barbour's praise of liberty thus becomes a plea for a benevolent application of justice. In this light, the two major aspects which Barbour associates with freedom, happiness and free choice, are necessarily dependent on the correct administration and functioning of the mechanisms of royal authority.

Although this is "the first address to Freedom in medieval literature" (Utz 1969: 152), Barbour's idea of liberty is constructed along foreseeable Scholastic lines. The pillars on which the poet bases freedom, free choice and the possibility of happiness, coincide with Aquinas' analysis of the concept. According to the medieval philosopher, people

sometimes choose to act freely: "every act of free choice is preceded by a judgement of reason." So far, this approach has nothing peculiarly medieval. But Aquinas also states that "man is free in choosing this or that particular good. The choices of some particular goods may be necessary as a means to the acquisition of the final end, happiness" (Copleston 1991: 193-198). In *The Bruce*, in one of the climactic moments of the narrative, then, Barbour, as man of his times and Archdeacon, conflates the idea of national freedom with Christian thought. This anagogic interpretation of attaining earthly happiness by choosing good things, which, at the same time, should lead us to eternal felicity, *beatitudo*, in the transcendent afterlife, is what is really medieval about this theory.

In the context of the Scottish chivalric romances, *Lancelot of the Laik* problematises the boundaries of freedom in relation to kingship and the oppression of the poor, which in more contemporary terms would correspond to Berlin's reference to the "oppressed classes." Amytans, as Arthur's spiritual guide in his regeneration process, warns him that "With gret myschef oppressit ar the pure; / And thow art causs of al this hol injure" (ll. 1355-56). This idea is further developed to explore the consequences of aggrieving all strata of society:

> May he [a prince] his rigne, may he his holl empire
> Susten al only of his owne desyre
> In servyng of his wrechit appetit
> Of averice and of his awn delyt
> And hald his men wncherist in thraldome?
> Nay! that shal sone his hie estat consome,

For many o knycht therby is broght ydoune

All uteraly to ther confusioune.

For oft it makith uther kingis by

To wer on them in trast of victory.

(ll. 1527-36)

Amytans exhorts the dangers of a lord exercising his *privata voluntas*. As the head of the communal body, the king should be the first one to commit himself to the laws of the country serving as an example for his vassals to follow.[40] But more importantly, the stability of his territories seems to depend on the respect of individual liberties as promoted by late medieval Scottish documents such as the Treaty of Bingham. Therefore, aware of the peculiarities of Scottish nation at the time, not only does the *makar* concentrate on freedom at a national level, but also he posits the close connection between good government, a country's survival as an independent state and personal liberties. Vogel suggests that "the degraded state of government in Scotland under James III" might have caused the author "to translate this particular portion of the story selected, and to amplify the political comments contained in the original" (Vogel 1943: 5).

[40] Manuals of chivalry underline the importance of an excellent ruler:

> Quant uns grans sires et qui est sires de païs est bons en telle maniere come dessus est dit, il en aime miex et prise plus les bons pour la cognoissance qu'il a des biens qu'il a veuz qu'il ont faiz. Et li autre compaignon, qui voient les bons estre honorez par les grans seigneurs pour leur bonté, ont plus grant volenté de venir a ce bien quant ilz voient qu'il est si bien cogneuz. (Geoffroi de Charny 1996: 106)

As for the oppression of the poor, in Part III of her treatise *Le Livre du corps de policie,* Christien de Pizan expresses her views about the manner in which rulers should treat the Third Estate:

> Aprés vient le .iii.e estat du peuple qui sont les gent de mestier et les laboureux de terre, lesquelz nous prenons pour la derreniere partie du corps de la policie, qui sont comme les jambes et les piez. De ses piez dit encore Pultarque que par souvraine cure on les doit guarder qu'ilz ne se hurtent d'aucun empeschement, pour ce que leur hurt pourroit venir au corps trop pereilleuse choite. Si leur est de tant plus necessaire bonne garde et [providence] comme pour le salu du corps il ne cessent d'aler par terre, c'est a entendre pour les divers labours que font les gens de mestier qui sont neccessaires a corps humain. (Christine de Pizan 1998: 106)

In the other Arthurian romance analysed here, *Golagros and Gawane*, the triad national freedom, autonomous nation and identity differs considerably from those expressed in the historical romances. Although the other three narratives also tackle these issues and their implications in the Scottish political situation of their times, the actions taken by Golagros' court in the Arthurian romance indicate a subtle but nonetheless different representation of these notions. After his feigned victory over Gawain, Golagros asks his "cumly knightis:"

> "Say me ane chois, the tane of thir twa,
> Quhethir ye like me lord, laught in the feild,
> Or ellis my life at the lest lelely forga,
> And boune yow to sum berne, that myght be your beild?"
>
> (ll. 1181-84)

The question very much echoes the Declaration of Arbroath, which established that if a King of Scots did not perform his duties correctly and had to submit to another nation, the Scottish community would be within its rights to depose him in favour of another leader (Declaration of Arbroath, Duncan [ed] 1997: 780).[41] The Declaration is "a manifesto of a united nation, determined to resist English aggression and to oust even Bruce should he show any sign of weakening in the cause" (Dickinson *et al.* [ed] 1952: 131).

So far, the sort of kingship proposed by the author is supported by exactly the same arguments as those posited in *The Bruce* and in *The Wallace*. The *makars* articulate a discourse in which the kingdom's self-government prevails over the figure of the sovereign at least at an idealistic level. In the historical romances, for example, Balliol

[41] Interestingly, in Anglo-Norman and English romances such as Guy of Warwick or Bevis of Hampton, "justice is above even kings and will prevail against royal attempts to subvert it" (Crane 1986: 69). Yet the spirit is completely different from that of the Scottish romances in so far as, within this ideological framework, the Anglo-Norman and English texts were defending baronial rights and ambitions, whereas the Scottish works prioritised the interests of independent Scotland.

cannot be the ruler of the nation in so far as he is characterised as a weak monarch who eagerly capitulates before Edward I. Therefore, in the Scottish contextualisation of *Golagros and Gawane*, Golagros, whose image is that of an ideal ruler, must necessarily place his position and privileges in the hands of his council since he has failed to maintain the independence of his dominions.

Nevertheless, what is strikingly dissimilar from the other narratives is the answer of Golagros' lords, which conveys a fascinating range of implications:

> "We wil na favour here fenye to frende nor to fa.
> We like yow ay as our lord, to were and to weild;
> Your lordschip we may noght forga, alse lang as we leif.
> Ye sal be our governour,
> Quhil your dais may endure,
> In eise and honour,
> For chance that may cheif."
>
> (ll. 1187-93)

The most obvious interpretation of these lines postulates the subjects of Golagros' sense of loyalty towards their lord owing to his fair administration of power. The oath of loyalty, as one of the pillars of late medieval social hierarchy, is the best reward for a good leader. Nevertheless, the response of Golagros' council creates an inescapable tension between fealty and allegiance to one's lord and the concept and maintenance of national/territorial freedom. Although by the end of the romance Arthur releases Golagros from his oath of homage reconciling both notions, the intricacies of the decision of Golagros' vassals still remain to be analysed. By elevating Golagros to the status of the best possible leader of his people, an implicit assumption of the cult of personality is

exhibited. This is at the expense of other criteria such as the future of the country under foreign rule or the effects derived from the coercion of national liberty. Therefore, while, as in *The Bruce* and in *The Wallace*, the nature of Golagros' attitude originates from considerations expressed in the Declaration of Arbroath, the subjects' way of action reveals some kind of naiveté absent from the other narratives. They merge the idea of identity with the figure of the ruler. Hence, their blind confidence in him may lead them to the loss of their national and quite probably also personal liberties.

In general, then, the Scottish romances explore the national concerns of government through the different attitudes and tenets of their main characters. After the Wars of Independence, the affirmation that "the peculiar pattern of England and Scotland after the [Norman] Conquest seems to have led to the invention of a type of romance which is truly of *origine lignagère*" (Legge 1963: 139) no longer applies. Although the English romances thoroughly dealt with "issues of insular baronial life" and legality (Crane 1986: 16), the scope of the Scottish texts concentrates on matters affecting the integrity and autonomy of the whole realm. Feudal disputes were superseded by territorial and national concerns.

Nationhood and Nationalistic Discourses

The national discourse in *The Bruce* is introduced within the discussion on the relativity of freedom and the necessity of having a sovereign who supports it. Barbour does so not only through the praise of liberty (I. 223-274), but also by means of excoriating Bruce's rivals to the Scottish Crown, Comyn and Balliol.

Edward offers the Scottish Throne to John Balliol if the latter swears fealty to the English king:

Bot Schyr Iohn the Balleoll perfay
Assentyt till him in all his will,
Quhar-throuch fell efter mekill ill.
He was king bot a litill quhile
And throuch gret sutelte and ghyle
For litill enchesone or nane
He was arestyt syne and tane,
And degradyt syne was he
Off honour and off dignite,
Quheyer it wes throuch wrang or rycht
God wat it yat is maist off mycht.[42]

(I. 168-178)

The actions of Bruce's rival demonstrate that he is not good enough to govern and lead Scotland. By strategically juxtaposing Balliol's agreement and Bruce's refusal (I. 157-164), Barbour contrasts their divergent attitudes towards the future of their nation. Balliol dissents from Bruce's plans for the country: he repudiates national freedom and puts that of Scotland at jeopardy, betraying his "eldris." In case it is not sufficiently obvious for the reader that Balliol is not the monarch his nation needs, the narrator explicitly anticipates these events, concluding that: "Quhar-throuch [the agreement] fell efter mekill ill" (I. 170). As King of Scots, Balliol's procedures bind the destiny of the entire country: he is a monarch who submits his nation to an external power. This occasions both the dramatic devastation of his country and the oppression of his people.

[42] Historically, however, the circumstances might have been different. Although it is true that Balliol did homage to Edward I, a letter to Edward I renouncing his homage and fealty [...] suggests the Edward has extorted his homage and fealty by violence." (Goldstein 1993: 42)

Even when Balliol is deposed by Edward "For litill enchesone or nane" (I. 173), the *makar* detaches himself from the righteousness of the English king's action: "Quheyer it wes throuch wrang or rycht / God wat it yat is maist of mycht" (I. 177-78). The author's position can be interpreted in two different yet compatible ways. First, he is ideologically biased, as his hero is Bruce (Balliol's rival), he is not interested in defending Balliol under any circumstances. Secondly, he adopts a nationalist perspective, as Balliol has placed his personal or feudal aims above those of his country, he deserves to be deposed by all available means (even by Edward's intervention). In both cases, Barbour implicitly attests that Balliol's deposition was brought about through God's wisdom, which presupposes the correctness of the action. The thematic and conceptual composition of *The Bruce* does not leave any room for feudal ambitions but only for the defence of the dynastic cause.

As Goldstein notes, John Balliol strategically disappears from the narrative in the remaining nineteen books: "Barbour effectively silences Balliol himself, a passive figure who never speaks" (Goldstein 1993: 154). The lack of a voice of his own prevents him from justifying his actions. At the same time, it avoids any tension between his supposed plans for the realm and those of Bruce. In the *makar's* political conception of the work, the former's silence operates as his symbolic inability to conceive a future for Scotland. As the author has already discredited him as the sovereign of the country, neither his presence nor his words are required any longer.[43]

[43] The similar historicised presentation of Balliol as a puppet monarch in Hary's *Wallace* may well be partly derived from *The Bruce*. Hary's portrayal of Balliol is even more exiguous than that of Barbour:

> Couatus Balȝoune folowid on hym [Edward I] fast;
> Till hald of hym granttyt at the last.
> In-contrar rycht a king he maid hym thar,
> Quhar-throuch Scotland rapentyt syne full sar.
> (I. 69-72)

Comyn's attitude in the first book also jeopardises the freedom of Scotland since his plans are focused on personal promotion rather than on national interest. By denouncing his agreement with Bruce to Edward, Comyn aims to become king and keep his lands too. Behind this behaviour, there is a total unawareness of his own country's most urgent needs: being a king under these circumstances would just mean being another of Edward's puppets (like Balliol). Therefore, he is as inappropriate to lead Scotland as Balliol was. Out of the three of them, only Bruce can be regarded as the ruler Scotland requires.

As well as his submission to Edward, there is another trait in Comyn's demeanour that makes him unworthy of being a king: his infringement of his previous pact with Bruce is a violation of the oath of loyalty. For a medieval audience, someone who cannot keep this oath would never be a good monarch, since he is undermining one of the pillars of late medieval society. Betrayal in the sphere of royal power is equated with the loss of national liberty. Barbour compares Comyn's treason to the greatest treacheries of pseudo-historical romances: those of Troy, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Arthur (I. 515-562).[44] Comyn is symbolically transformed into one of the greatest traitors of romance. The simile also situates Bruce in the same position as those of the Nine Worthies who were betrayed.[45] Crucially, the role played by Douglas is highlighted by the opposition between treason and loyalty: "Larg and luffand als wes he, / And our all thing luffyt lawte" (I. 363-364).[46] Therefore, in the construction of the Matter of Scotland, the monarchical hero is accompanied by his loyal comrade-at-arms. Although the nuances of the relationship between Bruce and Douglas may not have many clear

[44] As Ebin suggests, "in betraying Bruce, in Barbour's view, Comyn commits treason against his country as villainous as Mordred, Brutus, and the betrayer of Alexander" (Ebin 1971-72: 231).
[45] The notion of the Nine Worthies in *The Bruce* will be thoroughly analysed in the second chapter.
[46] Ebin also notes the association of Douglas with loyalty all through the romance. (Ebin 1971-72: 224)

parallelisms with those of other heroes, Barbour craftily reverts to epic and romance techniques in the creation of this new historically based sub-genre within romance.

In this elaborate creation of the Matter of Scotland in which the binary opposition between treason and loyalty is highlighted, the representation of Robert Bruce must be revised. Barbour has to tackle a serious problem when projecting young Robert's image: Bruce's adherence to Edward's party. As Barrow asserts, in the period between 1294 and 1304, Bruce was the only Scottish leader who deserted the national cause (Barrow 1996: 109). Historically, Bruce threatens national liberty and favours his personal interests at the expense of his loyalty to Scotland. In *The Bruce*, nevertheless, the *makar* manages to intermingle the emancipation of his country with Bruce's royal aspirations. The future king is portrayed as the only possible liberator and ruler of Scotland, even if his own interests are often far from the national policy he dictates.[47] The author conveniently suppresses the years of Bruce's support for Edward.[48] To do so, he makes use of poetic licence. In the 1290s, the Robert Bruce aspiring to the Crown after Alexander III's death is Robert Bruce, the Competitor, the grandfather of the future sovereign, and main character in the poem, King Robert I:

> As a genealogist of the Stewarts, Barbour knew that he was conflating three generations to create the image of a perfect leader. But an icon moves the sympathy of an audience more powerfully than a flawed model and the moving of one's audience to proper action is the causal end of our discipline

[47] "In 1306, however, when peace with Edward I no longer offered much in return, Robert revived the kingship in open defiance of his English overlord, making it difficult to separate the national cause from his personal and family interest." (Goldstein 1993: 150-51)

[48] This reinterpretation of events fits with Hayden White's definition of metahistory:

> Every proper history presupposes a metahistory which is nothing but a web of commitments which the historian makes in the course of his interpretation on the aesthetic, cognitive, and ethical levels. (White 1985: 71)

as defined by Aristotle and understood by early Christian commentators. (Jack 2000: 29)

This deliberate displacement of roles also serves first to avoid explaining or justifying Bruce's adherence to the English party. Secondly, it also creates the antagonism between Robert Bruce and Edward I from the very beginning. Thirdly, the struggle for the Scottish Throne between John Balliol and Bruce demonstrates who is the only possible king for Scotland. For the author's purposes, then, unifying the figures of the Competitor and his grandson turns out to be very profitable at a literary and political level.[49]

Nevertheless, this does not completely solve Barbour's problem, since the succession conflict took place before 1299. Therefore, after Bruce's refusal of Edward's devious proposal that he assume the crown of Scotland, Bruce is not mentioned again for three hundred lines. In the meantime, Balliol is crowned and deposed and the country occupied. After these three hundred lines of desolation, Robert Bruce (historically, the grandson) appears again:

Thys lord ye Brwys I spak of ayr
Saw all ye kynryk swa forfayr,
And swa trowblyt ye folk saw he
Yat he yaroff had gret pitte.

(I. 477-80)

This is the way in which the *makar* links Robert Bruce, the Competitor, and his grandson, the future king. Barbour's Robert Bruce (the one amalgamating the nationalistic virtues of grandfather, father and son) re-emerges as a patriot after his long silence, politically and historically necessary: "Barbour's construction of the fictive Bruce cannot admit of a

[49] Another interesting compatible interpretation is that offered by Kinghorn, for whom this "deliberate confusion of Bruce and his grandfather" serves to "give the impression to posterity that there had been a family resistance of two generations standing." (Kinghorn 1968-69: 141)

patriot who placed his duty to his nation behind that of his family" (Goldstein 1993: 150). In these three hundred lines, the period 1299-1304 is supposed to have elapsed. From a historical perspective, Bruce rejoins the national cause; but according to Barbour's account, he has never left it. On the rhetorical and literary levels, this fusion of characters also serves to convey a symbolic sense of unity to the romance. According to Aristotle: "in poetry the story, as an imitation of action, must represent one action, a complete whole, with its several incidents so closely connected that the transposal or withdrawal of any of them will disjoin and dislocate the whole" (Aristotle's *Art of Poetry*, ch. 8). For this reason, it is vital for the poet's purposes to avoid mentioning Bruce's desertion, inasmuch as the hero's attitude would not have been understood from a nationalistic position and would have damaged the intentionality of the plot as a whole.

Barbour's intentions as described are certainly nationalistic. Feudal concerns remain subsidiary to his main discourse.[50] In a feudal society, in which a lord may own lands and properties on both sides of the border, it is at least understandable that, owing to personal interests, sometimes a noble might support one king and sometimes the other.[51] In 1299, this was also Bruce's dilemma: he had to choose between his feudal interests and the national cause. Circumstances obliged him to opt for his personal and feudal interests. During this period, Robert I adhered to Edward I twice, first in 1296 and again in 1302. Notwithstanding that, in the historical context in which he was writing, the poet

[50] The delicate political situation of that particular moment did not encourage any other discursive pattern: "internal instability increased at Robert II's accession. Not only did Douglas make a spurious claim to the throne and have to be bought off, but Robert's eldest son was illegitimate. The future line of succession was not secure. It was in this context of political instability that Barbour wrote the *Bruce*." (Watt 1994: 93)

[51] The problem generated by the fact of having more than one lord tried to be solved by *liege homage*:

> Le cumul des soumissions, véritable lèpre de la vassalité, exerça à son tour ses ravages. C'était pour le combattre que la ligesse pourtant s'était constituée. Mais dès les dernières années du XI[e] siècle, les "Usages" [*sic*] barcelonais prévoient une inquiétante exception. "Nul," disent-ils, "ne peut se faire le *soliu* [liegeman] que d'un seul seigneur, à moins que l'autorisation ne lui en soit accordée par celui auquel il a d'abord prêté cet hommage." Un siècle environ plus tard, l'étape était presque partout franchie. (Bloch 1939: 334)

could not just explain the hero's desertion, if he wanted the nobles to support Robert II. To do so would have meant encouraging and justifying treason among the Scottish nobility in the late fourteenth century; that is, something completely opposed to Barbour's conceptual motivations.

Another apposite component of Barbour's ideology refers to the succession. While Bruce is represented as the ideal King of Scots, the author has to resolve another serious problem when it comes to the election of the king. Robert Bruce was not the best positioned under a strict interpretation of the rule of primogeniture. The introduction to the legal matters concerning the succession is clearly presented at first:

> Tyll yat ye barnage at ye last
> Assemblyt yaim and fayndyt fast
> To cheys a king yar land to ster
> Yat off awncestry cummyn wer
> Off kingis yat aucht yat reawte
> And mayst had rycht yair king to be.
>
> (I. 41-46)

Likewise, the subsequent main argument defended by Balliol and his supporters remains clear and unambiguous: "[...] he wes cummyn off ye offspryng / Off hyr yat eldest syster was," (I. 50-51). Historically, this corresponds to their main argument, since Balliol was the true heir to the Scottish Crown according to the strict rule of primogeniture.

Yet, when it comes to Bruce and his followers, Barbour's exposition appears to be deliberately obscure.[52] Goldstein argues that at first Barbour seems to allude to the historical arguments posited by Bruce. The future King of Scots claimed that particular

[52] The author's mastery as a poet, however, would have permitted him to explain Bruce's argument in a much more intelligible manner, following the notion that "the perfection of diction is for it to be at once clear and not mean." (Aristotle's *Art of Poetry*, ch. 22)

nature of kingship should exclude the rule of primogeniture. If this were so, Bruce's thesis at this point in the poem would serve to refute that of Balliol. However, subsequently Barbour obscures the argument by saying in branch collaterate. Since all the competitors claim that they are descended from Earl David, William the Lion's brother, Goldstein concludes that these lines do not fit with Bruce's historical position (Goldstein 1993: 155).

Barbour's audience, on hearing this part of the romance read aloud, could probably reach no conclusion at all from this on who should be the rightful monarch in legal terms. They could only continue to listen to the poet in search of further evidence. Nonetheless, none of the other arguments put forward by the historical Bruce are alluded to since they would probably have worked against the main purpose of the romance. The author was not really interested in giving much more complementary information about this matter Historically, Balliol was the best positioned candidate. Basically, Balliol was the son of the daughter of Earl David's oldest daughter, whereas Bruce was the son of the earl's younger daughter. Consequently, "the facts of Scottish history for the past two hundred years were against Bruce." (Barrow 1993: 41-42)

As inheritor of the *roman courtois* and the epic traditions,[53] Barbour concentrates on heroic action rather than on thoroughly debating the nature of the competitors' argumentation. He makes use of another rhetorical device to persuade the reader about the sort of king Scotland needs: one who is going to lead the country freely and justly. The Archdeacon seems to resort to the *roman courtois* convention in which the best knight is the Elect because of inherent merit. Although, as buttressed by historical

[53] Kinghorn defines the romance as follows: "*Bruce* is in fact a 'romance' in the late medieval sense of the word, that is to say, a narrative of heroic action." Moreover, "its form and character are those of the classical epic, which represented a combination of some fact with a great deal of fancy and it is written in a contemporary form of English." (Kinghorn 1968-69: 134-35)

evidence, Balliol was forced to submit to the English king, the invention of a secret alliance between Balliol and Edward (I. 168-78) helps the *makar* to suit his own ends.[54] He depicts Balliol not as a martyr of the Scottish cause, but as a traitor, comparatively strengthening Bruce's position as a leader. According to chivalric tradition, the military worth of a great lord is of the greatest importance. Therefore, the author's projection of Bruce's image as the champion of national freedom and ideal leader justifies his right to be king. *Per contra*, Balliol, owing to his weakness (historically) and to his treason (in the romance) should not be the King of Scots.

The arguments posited by Barbour might be inspired by (or at least coincide with) those expressed in the Declaration of Arbroath:

> We are bound to him [Robert I] for the maintaining of our freedom both by his right and merits, as to him by whom salvation has been wrought unto our people, and by him, come what may, we mean to stand. Yet if he should give up what he has begun, seeking to make our kingdom subject to the king of England or to the English, we would strive at once to drive him out as our enemy and a subverter of his own right and ours, and we would make some other man who was able to defend us our king.[55] (Declaration of Arbroath, Duncan [ed] 1997: 780)

The most important ideas posited in this extract are the equation of right and merit, which minimises the supremacy of the rule of primogeniture over any other argument.

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[54] "The historic Balliol's opposition to Edward is ignored and his eventful reign dismissed in ten lines." (Watt 1994: 97)

[55] Interestingly, in the *Policraticus*, John of Salisbury advocates a similar proceeding in the election of leader, together with Divine Providence:

> And so, as has been said, he [the prince] is placed by divine governance at the apex of the commonwealth, and preferred above all others, sometimes through the secret ministry of God's providence, sometimes by the decision of His priests, and again it is the votes of the whole people which concur to place the ruler to authority. (*Policraticus*, Book V)

Furthermore, the Scottish lords (and people) will oppose and depose the monarch should he betray his country. These views, then, correspond with those expressed in *The Bruce*. Bruce wins his right to be king thanks to merits, inasmuch as he is the leader destined to liberate Scotland; hence, he also gains its people's support.

Subsequently, in the climactic moments before Bannockburn, Bruce's image as a national hero is reinforced: he makes an inspired and inspiring speech to enthuse his men and reaffirm the nationalistic message Barbour wishes to convey. The hero, playing the role of a general according to Classical tradition, shows his command of the rhetoric of persuasion. Kliman claims that "Barbour develops the last great exhortations to battle before Bannockburn (XI, XII) more fully than the other rhetorical speeches, bringing to a dramatic climax Bruce's self-realization of his aims" (Kliman 1975: 156). In the crucial events of the narrative, Barbour deploys the most rhetorically sophisticated language following the rules of decorum. According to Geoffrey of Vinsauf:

> Whether short or long, let the discourse always be decorated within and without; but choose among ornaments with discretion. First examine the soul of the word and then its face, whose outward show alone you should not trust. Unless the inner ornament conforms to the outer requirement, the relation between the two is worthless. (Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria Nova*, ll. 742-47)

Bruce's speech is built around three main topics: the country's freedom, its rights (which are supported by God) and material possessions. First, the King of Scots emphasises that "Ye fyrst [reason] is yat we haf ye rycht / And for ye rycht ay God will fycht" (XII. 235-36). Secondly, aware of his followers' personal interests, Bruce refers to the "ryches" the English have brought with them, so "Yat ye powrest of 3ow sall be /

Bath rych and mychty [...]" (XII. 237-44). The monarch contemplates the material profits his men may acquire from the spoils. Through the manner in which he expounds this matter, it seems as though Bruce is addressing the vast majority of his troops (or at least representatives of all the social strata) — again conveying that the national struggle includes every single Scot. Thanks to his command of rhetoric, he manages to conflate the country's interests with those of his followers. Finally, he stands for his cause (the liberation of Scotland) and his subjects. When he refers to "childer" and "wywis," he means not only widows and orphans, but those who, according to chivalric tradition, are the weaker ones who deserve to be defended by knights.[56] By including all the inhabitants of the country in the King's words, Barbour's Bruce becomes not only a chivalric but also a national hero.

At the beginning of *The Wallace*, it is William Wallace himself who is the catalyst of nationalistic discourse. Thematically, Hary conflates the hero's personal revenge with the national cause in a similar way to Barbour's intermingling of Bruce's dynastic aspirations with the future of Scotland.[57] Wallace's image as a tragic hero is created early on by allusions to the misfortunes of the members of his family together with his escape "till Gowry" (I. 144-54). This perception of incessant pursuit is repeated all through the narrative. At this point, his affliction on account of the unfortunate *fatum* of his family is ingeniously equated with his suffering for Scotland:

> Willȝham Wallace or he was man of armys
> Gret pitte thocht that Scotland tuk sic harmys.

[56] Here, then, there is a necessary conflation of chivalric ideals with epic virtues because of the military context of the hero's biography.
[57] As in *The Bruce* and in *The Wallace*, in the English *King Horn*, the hero's "political and personal goals are inseparable" too. (Crane 1986: 34)

Mekill dolour it did hym in his mynd,

For he was wys, rycht worthy, wicht and kynd.

(I. 181-84)

Even before he became a knight, he had expressed his concern with the state of his devastated and subdued country. Hary's rhetorical devices redefine and unite the concepts of personal and national endurance in the figure of Wallace. From then on, both ideas will form an inseparable objective in the hero's mind. Wallace is first represented non-naturalistically as a *puer senex* of legend rather than the youthful warrior.[58] He no longer thinks as a boy does but as a mature man, an indispensable requisite for leading his nation against Edward I. This image is further elaborated throughout Book I: as McDiarmid points out, "he [Wallace] does not make a youthful impression, 'Sad of contenance he was bathe auld and ȝing' (201-2)" (McDiarmid 1968: I. lxxxviii).

The type of nationalistic discourse which Wallace is going to articulate is rendered even before his first appearance in the romance. Unlike Barbour who, despite his unquestionably partisan dialectics, always shows a more balanced posture towards the enemy, *The Wallace* begins with a very combative attitude towards the English. This echoes Scotland's situation at the time when Hary was writing:

[58] The figure of the *puer senex* originated in late antiquity, but was easily adapted to Christian literature (Curtius 1990: 98-103). In *The Wallace*, this *topos*, which was traditionally associated with Saints' Lives, is allegorically redefined in the context of the Wars of Independence. At the same time, Wallace's construction as a martyr of the national struggle is typologically enriched with this. As Calin remarks, a typical illustration of a *puer* or *puella senex* is the French rhymed *vita* of Saint Catherine, "a woman with the beauty of a girl and the wisdom of a sage" (Calin 1994: 105). Also in French literature, it is a staple of Epic poetry. The image of Roland in *La Chanson d'Aspremont* is a good illustration of this. Although Roland is repeatedly regarded as a young man, "enfens," the way in which he harangues his men at the battlefield demonstrates the knowledge of an older leader:

"Huimais pensés, baron, de l'eslaischier.
Cascuns tant valle con s'il fust chevalier.
Querés vos peres par cel grant destorbier:
S'il ont mestier, bien lor devés aidier.
En l'onor de Deu, qui nos puist consellier,
Ferrai en als por paiens demagier."
(ll. 5558-63)

Till honour Ennymyis is our haile entent.
It has beyne seyne in thir tymys bywent,
Our ald Ennemys cummyn of Saxonys blud,
That neuyr ȝeit to Scotland wald do gud
Quhow gret kyndnes thar has beyne kyth thaim till.
It is weyle knawyne on mony diuers syde,
How thai haff wrocht in-to thar mychty pryde
To hald Scotlande at wndyr euirmar,
Bot god abuff has maid thar mycht to par.

(I. 5-13)

"Writing in a period when James III was involved in a policy of reconciliation with England, opposed by many Scots, Hary's defined ethical (!) aim was to move this audience to hatred for the English" (Jack 2001: 48).[59] Therefore, the kind of nationalism postulated by Hary is as much a reaffirmation of *Scottishness* as a manifesto against the English. He "develops a narrative designed to move rather than to instruct, a work intensively nationalistic and anti-English in outlook, organized around the life of a single, almost supernatural hero" (Ebin 1971-72: 235). Nationalism is constructed as a counteraction directed against the traditional enemy:

> With the English metonymically transformed into "Sothroun", human beings are reduced to objects that become easy to eliminate without moral qualms. Racist discourse, like other repressive practices of language, generally works this way: the Other is furnished with a label, rendering the person an object not a subject (Goldstein 1993: 222).

[59] These lines concretely refer "to the period 1474-78, when James III and his unpopular councillors preferred an English alliance to the traditional French one and sought to confirm the new policy by a system of matrimonial alliances." (McDiarmid 1968: II. 124)

The poet, then, recreates the perfect scenario, the Wars of Independence, to arouse the audience's national feeling against the English menace to their identity. Hary's argument is based upon the Scottish past experience which is consistently *translated* into his contemporary Scotland.

Moreover, the author's reference to the English origins as "cummyn of Saxonys blud" anticipates the legendary contextualisation of right that he is going to expound.[60] First, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1136) established the common origin of all the inhabitants of Britain through the progeny of Brutus, the mythological founder of the British nation. Wace and Layamon's translations of Geoffrey's *Historia* into the vernacular also contributed to the development of the myth.[61] Formerly, although Bede did not refer to the mythological founder directly and recognised the existence of "five languages and four nations — English, British, Irish, and Picts," he did state that "at first the only inhabitants of the island were Britons" (Bede 1990: 45).

In the twelfth century, then, Geoffrey re-elaborates the history of the British people already including the figures of Brutus and Arthur, whose political overtones were further developed in later versions of the English *Brut* to accommodate and justify the ambitions of the Plantagenets. *The Brut* or *The Chronicles of England*, from which different editions and versions appeared between 1440 and 1528 (Brie [ed]: 1906: x), is a perfect illustration of this:

> Þe v day afterward they aryued in an hauene of Totenesse, & comen in-to þe Ile of Albion; & þer þey founde neiþer man ne woman, as þe story telleþ, but Geauntz; & þey woned in hulles and in Caues. Brut saw þe land was fayr, &

[60] Regarding this point, Goldstein argues that "resting on a distinctively racial mythology, the poem swerves away from history and its privileged form of legal argumentation. [...] The perpetual enmity between Scot and Saxon, based on the difference of blood, is viewed as a constant of history, something beyond argument." (Goldstein 1993: 233)

[61] Wace is in essence a translation of Geoffrey, whereas Layamon translates Wace.

> at his likynge, & good also for hym & for his folk [...]. Brut & his men anon stertyn vp, & his men foughten with þe Geauntȝ, & quellyd hem euerychon [...]. And þis Brut lete felle adoun wodes, & lete erye & sowe londes, & done mow medes for sustinaunce of hym & his peple. & he departed þe land to hem, so þat eche of hem had a certayn place for to dwelle vpon. And Brut late Calle al þis land Britaigne, atfer his owne name, & his folk he lete calle Britouns. (*The Brut*, pp. 10-12)

The text's political and ideological purposes become patent from the very first lines. As opposed to Bede, who wrote at a time in which late medieval kingdoms were not consolidated yet (731), the anonymous author/translator of *The Brut* introduces the criteria of sovereignty and invasion. The Trojan Brutus conquers the whole "island," which would legitimise his descendants' (the Kings of England) claim over Wales and Scotland. As a coloniser, he pulls away the roots of any former inhabitants and their culture by changing the country's name after his own, Britain.[62] So much so that they build their own towns and the lands are divided among Brutus' vassals. Nevertheless, the colonial discourse is sagacious enough to negate any kind of former civilisation since only "Geauntz" lived there.[63] The British colonisation of Britain is no longer an invasion but a civilising act. As in a *locus classicus* of chivalric romance, the British become the civilising knights who bring light to a primitive land.

[62] Coryn, the best of Brutus' warriors, also renames "Cornewayle" and the future London is called "þe new Troye" (p. 11). A very typical practice of colonisers throughout history is to rename the newly conquered lands according to their own language.

[63] In more recent times, Fanon identifies the same attitude on the part of the coloniser in Africa: "Colonial domination, because it is total and tends to oversimplify, very soon manages to disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people. This cultural obliteration is made possible by the occupying power, by the banishment of the natives and their customs to outlying districts by colonial society, by expropriation, and by systematic enslaving of men and women." (Fanon 1980: 190)

The legend of Arthur as the king unifying the British Isles, first mentioned by Geoffrey in his *Historia*, is also present in *The English Brut*. The surrender of the Scots is of particular interest to our analysis: after having begged Arthur's mercy on them, "he [Arthur] hade pite of ham, and ȝaf ham lif and lyme; and alle þai felle adoune to his feete, and bicome his lege men, and he toke of ham homages" (*The Brut*, p. 77). The author's dialectics are unequivocal: the Celtic king shows his mercy by not killing all the Scots, in return for swearing everlasting subjection to Arthur, which politically justified the English kings' claims over Scotland.[64] Again, *The Brut* carefully deploys language and action to provide his narrative with a justifiable colonialist discourse.

The Arthurian legend was progressively gaining ground. The Celtic/British origin of King Arthur and his claim to rule over the British Isles were very appealing to the English monarchs who saw a double justification for their bellicose aggressiveness towards their Irish, Welsh and Scottish neighbours. If Brutus offered the English the possibility of extolling the common past of those different peoples of Britain, the Arthurian myth was re-adapted to their political claims. Hence, not only was it employed to legitimise the military occupation of England's nearest neighbours but it also served to reinvent the Celtic ancestry of the English kings. By referring to them as "Saxonys," Hary abrogates the English demands for hegemony according to the legendary past of the British people[65] and negates any sort of right they may put forward concerning Scotland.[66]

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[64] "When he [Edward I] wished to justify his claims to overlordship in Scotland in 1291, he had to ask monasteries to consult their chronicles [...] presumably because he had no histories of his own, even allowing for ready access to the library of Westminster Abbey." (Clanchy 1987: 132)

[65] The Scottish chroniclers also refuted the Arthurian legend owing to its political implications. Fordun tries to give some counter-arguments to Monmouth but directly quoting from the latter (III. xxv). The elaboration of the anti-Arthurian argument evolved until the Early Renaissance when Hector Boece rearranged the story to the extent of having Modred transformed into the King of Scots. He is the heroic figure who confronts the treacherous Arthur.

[66] The use of a mythological past to justify the autonomy of a nation was not exclusive of Scotland, but was very typical of the late Middle Ages. In Catalonia, for instance, the myth of Otger Cataló and the Nine

Interestingly enough, if in *The Wallace* the tension between the chivalric and the national discourses is never palpable (although the hero is a knight), in the French *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* the main character's actions reflect the typical attitudes and ambitions of his class. The single combats and skirmishes undertaken by Hary's Wallace are assimilated to the dialectics of Scotland's national independence. His concerns are not individual promotion, but his is a heroic figure as long as he defends the rights of his country. *Per contra*, Cuvelier's recreation of Bertrand negotiates between the protagonist's aspirations and behaviour as a knight and his role as the emblematic voice of French nationalism. In most cases, his words correspond with those of the defender of the national enterprise:

> "[...] Mes enfans, or aiez sentement
> Et souvenance en vous d'acquerre bonnement
> La gloire des sains cieulx tout au conmencement;
> Car qui pour son seigneur en bataille mort prent,
> Dieu a de lui pitié, en gloire ou il l'atent;
> Car on se doit combatre aventureement
> Pour sa terre defendre; [...]"
>
> (ll. 4620-26)

His oration connects the fight against the English with the defence of the land and *their* lord. The national concerns become central to Bertrand's speech: his "seigneur," the

Knights of Fame was employed with the same purpose: Otger Cataló, from whom the name of the country is derived, was supposed to be a knight from Gascony or Germany who founded Catalonia; whereas the Nine Knights gave origin to nine of the most important noble families in Catalonia. The myth of Otger is particularly conspicuous at a national level since it aimed to prevent the Castilians from claiming overlordship over the country. Historically the birth of Catalonia as a region independent from France began with Borrell II's (Wilfred the Hairy's son, the first Count of Barcelona) refusal to pay fealty to Hugh Capet of France in 988. When a Castilian noble, Ferran I, took possession of the country after the Treaty of Casp (1412), the legend of Otger Cataló was re-enacted emphasising the non-Gothic origin of the Catalan people.

King of France, as the symbolic head of the state, represents France. Bertrand identifies the monarch with the protection of the whole country against foreign invaders. Through the knight's voice, the author makes the sovereign and the realm become an inseparable unity. As in the case of Scotland, the sense of nationalism of the French is encouraged by means of opposition to English hegemonic aspirations. The poignant ideology of the passage corroborates the semi-sacred tone of Bertrand, who views a vassal's death for the King of France as a holy sacrifice, leading to "la gloire des sains cieulx."

In fact, also from a historical perspective,

> Bertrand de Guesclin was undoubtedly one of the greatest captains of the Middle Ages. He set himself and accomplished the same task that the Maid of Orleans undertook some two generations later: that of making the kingdom of France a solid edifice, capable of standing four-square and firm against the oncoming waves of foreign invasion. (Coryn 1933: v)

Nevertheless, this is not always the case: in ll. 2624-80, after another royalist plea in favour of his king and country, Bertrand accepts a personal challenge from Thomas of Canterbury. Cuvelier problematises the tension between the national and the chivalric discourses through the mediation of the citizens of Dinan. On the one hand, as a knight, Bertrand is forced to defend his honour against Thomas' accusations. At the same time, however, a single combat is going to be fruitless as far as the French cause is concerned. Bertrand's defeat and death (it is a joust for life and death) would be completely counterproductive to the general interest of the realm as he is the natural leader in the battlefield. Conversely, if his antagonist is killed, this would not affect the English army and pretensions at all in so far as he is a simple knight. For this reason, the people of Dinan are so concerned about Bertrand's chivalric demeanour:

Adonc s'en est la ville moult durement troublee,
Et prient pour Bertran a la chiere membree
Qu'a joye le ramaint par bonne destinee;
Bourgoises et bourgois en font grant assemblee.

(ll. 2687-90)

The citizens' intervention highlights the controversy between chivalric conduct and national duties. While the French champion does confront and vanquish Thomas, the resolution offered seems to suggest that there is not a definitive response to the problem: must a knight defend his personal honour above anything else or must he sacrifice his reputation in favour of his country's cause? In the rest of the *Chanson*, he continues to be the paladin of the nationalistic discourse, but the consequences of his unlikely (though not totally impossible) defeat are never answered. Therefore, Cuvelier accounts for the existence of this tension, but leaves the answer for the audience to debate.

Among Scottish Arthurian romances, there are some points in *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane* which allude to a king's ideal position towards his nation and can be interpreted in connection to the Scotland of the time. In the Scottish *Lancelot*, the author discusses a monarch's responsibility towards his kingdom by contrasting Arthur's attitude with that of Gawain. When Gawain decides to seek the Red Knight (Lancelot in disguise), all the members of the Round Table want to join him in his quest. Arthur reproves his nephew:

[...] "Sair Gawan, nece, why dois yow so?
Knowis yow nocht I myne houshold suld encress
In knychthed and in honore and largess?

And now yow thinkith mak me dissolat
Of knychtis and my houss transulat
To sek o knycht and it was never more
Hard sich o semblé makith o before."

(ll. 2200-06)

After the lesson on good kingship Amytans taught him, not only has Arthur got a more clearly defined idea of his assigned functions as a sovereign, but he has also nurtured a renewed conception of his court. The *makar* negotiates the discord between the chivalric ideal as represented by Gawain's demeanour and a nation's priorities. As a noble warrior, Gawain longs for knightly action and adventures.[67] As soon as he contemplates the possibility of looking for the mysterious Red Knight, he hastens to depart in search of him without considering the *national* implications of his decision. The regenerated Arthur has acquired a different insight of things: leaving the country without any knight would debilitate its defence against any possible invasion. Arthur's lands would become indefensible. The King also knows that, after having ignored the nation for a long time, he needs to regain his vassals' confidence through "knychthed, honore and largess." Although this scene is also present in the *Lancelot do Lac*, within the Scottish literary and historical contexts, the transcendence of the nation's destiny becomes more important than that of a single knight (or even king). Therefore, this passage acquires exceptional, dramatic connotations.

Nevertheless, Gawain, who is characterised as the most loyal of Arthur's retinue and as a great warrior and military leader at all times (ll. 2631-78), fails to understand his

[67] As Calin remarks, the solidarity among Arthurian knights is present all through the French *Lancelot* (Calin 1994: 143). Thus, Gawain's resolute decision can be regarded as one illustration of this knightly brotherhood among knights.

country's pressing urgencies once again. When Arthur permits him to take forty knights to seek Lancelot, his answer could not be both more chivalric and less adequate:

> [Gawain] On kneis swore, "I sal the suth duclar
> Of everything when I agan repar
> Nor never more aghane sal I returnn
> Nore in o place long for to sujornn
> Whill that the knycht or verray evydens
> I have, that shal be toknis of credens."
>
> (ll. 2237-42)

Following the romance tradition, Gawain makes a solemn promise embellished with the most eloquent rhetoric.[68] While this would be the perfect proceeding in a purely chivalric context, the politicised question of nationhood lying behind the text does not allow for such an answer. Being the second time he must express the same idea, Arthur's new rebuke may almost be interpreted in a comic light: [69]

> Saying, "Nece, yow haith al foly urocht
> And wilfulness that haith nocht in thi thoght

[68] In the Provençal Arthurian romance *Jaufre*, the hero makes a similar promise not to eat or sleep until he has vanquished the arch-villain Taulat: "Qe ja tro qe l'aja trobat / No manjarai mais per mon grat" (ll. 637-38). With a great deal of irony, the author relates, either through his own comments or through the words of other characters, the hunger and exhaustion that Jaufre undergoes since he takes his solemn vow to the letter. For example, when Arthur asks Estout (who has been defeated by Jaufre) about Jaufre, a subtle sense of humour is not exempt from Estout's reply:

> "Et anc nol puec far estancar
> Tan entro qe ages manjat,
> E si era ben adobat,
> Ans dis qe ja no manjara,
> Ni gauig ni deleit non aura,
> Ni no pausara ab sun grat,
> Tro qe Taulat aura trobat,"
>
> (ll. 1306-12)

Estout cannot understand why Jaufre did not eat anything if the food was good. The contrast between idealised promises and real human needs is at the core of the humour.

[69] It is also quite ironic that Arthur reminds Gawain of the battle that only Lancelot, the absent knight, can win.

The day of batell of Galot and me."

(ll. 2245-47)

Gawain's single-minded predisposition towards knightly deeds of arms incapacitates him to comprehend the extremely delicate situation of his country. Therefore, even in the Scottish romance which most overtly deals with chivalric themes (if the peculiar case of *Clariodus* is left aside), chivalric ideals and acts are restrained by the dialectics of national considerations.

Similarly, although the portrayal of Galehot is drastically reduced in the Scottish *Lancelot*, there are some subtle elements (absent from the original) which highlight political issues typical of the Scottish approach to romances. While in *Lancelot do Lac* Galehot himself tells his knights that it would not be honourable for him to take part in the battle (p. 276), in *Lancelot of the Laik*, Galiot assembles a council, in which his counsellors suggest that to fight with Arthur would degrade him (ll. 745-52). That the final resolution is made by a group of nobles accords to the Scottish positioning of the time: at least ideally important issues affecting the realm should be consulted with the nobility. Consequently, decision making must be shared by the monarch and his council. Although this was common practice in late medieval countries with hereditary right of counsel (Guenée 1985: 172), it also highlights the Scottish preoccupation with a nation's mechanisms of government, which is present in the four romances analysed.

In *Golagros and Gawane,* the politicisation of the original French narrative transforms the Arthurian romance into the perfect forum to debate the Scottish preoccupations with government of a nation. As mentioned earlier, Golagros' feigned victory allows us to see him as the kind of monarch a country requires. He places his sovereignty in his people's

hands (as in the scene in *Lancelot of the Laik* just analysed) by asking them whether they prefer to have him as a lord subjected to a king or to choose another lord instead (ll. 1168-86). In contrast, in *The First Continuation*, the Riche Sodouyer does not consult his council to deliberate on the submission of his land. His only worry is his beloved, who may die if she learns about his defeat. In this essentially courtly context, she is sent to another castle. The narrator addresses the audience directly:

> Savés por coi l'en fist aler?
> Por ce qu'il li voloit celer
> Coment li estors ert finez.
> Si tost con s'en fu delivrés,
> Si fu par le castel seü
> La fins toute, si com il fu.
>
> (ll. 6473-78)

The concerns of *Roman courtois* dominate the narrative of the French text. The political dilemmas of the Scottish adaptation are not present. In *Golagros and Gawane*, these ideas situate the text in the same ideological framework as the Declaration of Arbroath. The Declaration extols an ideal — and an idealised situation — intimately connected with the notion of the natural law, in which royal power should rely on the people's approval.

Similarly, the concept of leadership in which the best possible leader should be the lord is common to the two Scottish historical romances studied here, *The Bruce* and *The Wallace*. In *The Bruce*, Barbour's dismisses the importance of the rule of primogeniture through a deliberate obfuscation of the succession procedures. If Bruce is the only valid monarch for the country, it is because he is the best leader. The allusion to the "eldris" in *The Bruce, Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane* must be understood, then, not

as a defence of familial right, but of national/racial differences between the imperial menace and the autochthonous inhabitants of Scotland. In *The Wallace*, following Barbour's fictive strategies, Hary denounces the unhistorical agreement between Balliol and Edward I. Once Wallace had instructed Bruce, the latter emerges as the ideal king for Scotland, which again prioritises personal merit in detriment of the rule of primogeniture. The biggest difference between *The Bruce* and *The Wallace* and the Arthurian romances is the necessarily historical contextualisation of the former. The theme of national freedom forces Bruce and Wallace to fight to attain this ideal. Were they not able to defend their country's liberty, they would be rejected as leaders. By way of contrast, in *Golagros and Gawane*, the fact that the vassals opt for retaining Golagros as their lord at any price (in fact, the price of national freedom) postulates his excellence as a king in the eyes of his people. Nevertheless, this particular event would never take place in the historical romances since the independence of Golagros' idealised, small, free country completely differs from the portrayed reality of Wallace and Bruce's occupied Scotland.

As well as these indirect analyses of issues to which the Scottish audience would be particularly sensitive, both Arthurian texts make overt allusions to the kingdom of Scotland. In *Lancelot*, the author subtly includes referential elements to generate an extra tension between Lancelot and Arthur (absent from the French text). Amytans accuses the monarch of being responsible for king Ban's death and his wife and son's disinheritance, a passage which is also included in the original. What is significantly different from the French *Lancelot* is the name given to Ban's kingdom: the imaginary Benoyc becomes Scotland, under the name of "Albenak" (Gray 1912: xvii). Not only does this transformation make the romance more appealing to the audience but it redefines the

narrative axis in the Scottish political milieu. Again, the question of the Scottish nation either free or submitted to an overlord is posited. It is extraordinarily significant that the sin Arthur had forgotten was the one corresponding to his duties towards Albenak. On isolating this act of misconduct in a king, the *makar* strategically examines the problems and paradoxes occasioned by subjection to foreign authority. The country has to wait for the external lord's help, which at the same time happens to be an imposition of non-native patronage. Therefore, it is not difficult to imagine why this overlord would not be as eager as a native ruler to defend the nation's interests. The Scottish implications in the late Middle Ages are inescapable.

The national component is completed by also *scotticising* also Lancelot, who as Ban's son, is the heir to the Scottish crown. The knight who is supposed to intervene decisively in favour of Arthur is portrayed in the middle of two major tensions: first, he is in love with his king's wife; second, the sovereign himself is indebted to him owing to his negligence towards the kingdom of Albenak. Again, the correspondences and dissimilarities between the idealisation of courtly games and *fin'amors* and the more realistic dissemination of the mechanism of kingship create a very particular progression of the action.

Nevertheless, the *nationalised* Lancelot does not make any sort of overtly Scottish statement. On the contrary, his main objective focuses on his being accepted by the queen in the service of love. At this point, the national parallelisms with Scotland either fade away or are too artificially maintained. The existence of the original French text necessarily imposes a number of constrictions on the thematic elaboration of the Scottish version, which the author could not ignore. In the Old French *Prose Lancelot,* the hero is never interested in recriminating Arthur's violation of his duty towards Ban in so far as

the knight's main concern is attaining Guenevere's heart.[70] Lancelot *must* emerge as Arthur's champion to be accepted as Guinevere's *fin amant*: only the best knight on the field would be good enough to become the perfect lover. Were the reader to interpret the final scenes of the narrative in *Lancelot of the Laik* as an allegorised representation of Scotland, the signs would not work at all. Lancelot as the inheritor of the throne of Albenak (Scotland) would be the main knight responsible for the victory of Arthur (the foreign overlord?) victory over an invader, Galiot. This political allegory would not make any sense at this juncture. Therefore, the numerous references to the Scottish situation at the time are meant to discuss different approaches to the concepts of freedom, kingship and national identity; nonetheless, they do not operate as a national allegory.

In *Golagros and Gawane*, the Scottish echoes are also present all through the narrative. Thus, when Spynagros tells Arthur that Golagros does not pay fealty to any overlord, Arthur's hegemonic ambitions come to light:

> "Hevinly God!" said the heynd, "how happynis this thing?
> Herd thair ever ony sage sa selcouth ane saw!
> Sal never myne hart be in saill na in liking,
> Bot gif I loissing my life, or be laid law,
> Be the pilgramage compleit I pas for saull prow,
> Bot dede be my destenyng,
> He sall at my agane cumyng
> Mak homage and oblissing,

[70] In fact, by the end of the cyclic romance, the prime motivation for Lancelot to wage war on Claudas is because Guenevere tells his lover that Claudas has insulted her (V. 324-25). The war against Claudas helps Arthur to amend his previous mistake when he did not help Ban. Yet, Lancelot refuses to become king: he "respont que ce ne feroit il en nulle maniere mais il fera hector son frere roy de benoyc. et lyonel roy de gaule. Et bohort roy de gannes" (V. 377). Then not even after recovering his lands is Lancelot interested in governing them. This confirms the assumptions that Guenevere is much more important than his lost territories.

I mak myne avow!"

(ll. 265-73)

Arthur's oath has nothing to do with Gawain's chivalric avowal in *Lancelot of the Laik*. That of the king can only be interpreted as an obstinate menace of invasion of a foreign land without any justifiable reason. Arthur's aggressive language is dominated by images of death and destruction. He is disposed to wage war against Golagros going as far as necessary to accomplish his objective. By presenting Arthur's future inroad in such a way, the *makar* creates a conspicuous correspondence between the text and late medieval Scotland: "the introduction of the issue of fealty in the Scottish Romance has inescapable political overtones" (Jack 1975: 9). The audience could facilely identify this coercion of national freedom with past and contemporary Anglo-Scottish tensions. Golagros, courteous and valiant, becomes the *speculum principis* for the country's rulers. All the death and suffering occasioned by war deeply move Golagros. His love for his people obliges him to defend personally his possessions and independence before Arthur's knights: "[...] "I sal bargane abyde, and ane end bryng; / Tomonre, sickirly, my self sall seik to the feild."" (ll. 772-73). As a good leader, his double commitment to his people and country reveals his moral and knightly superiority to Arthur, who never considers combat himself. In the national discourse ascribed to the narrative, then, a king must equally love and defend his people and his nation's interests.

Conclusion

At a time when relationships with England generated numerous tensions in the area of identity, nationhood and kingship, the Scottish romances problematise these issues endeavouring to provide some answers. Although Hary and Barbour convey these

notions in a more direct manner than the composers of the Arthurian romances, all of them purport to debate the nature, interrelations and concerns of these ideas. The *makars* offer a conception of kingship which does not leave room for individual aspirations unless they are assimilated within a national discourse concerned with the common good of the nation. The king should guarantee the autonomy of the country and administer his power with the perfect combination of justice and mercy, symbolically mirroring God's divine governing of the world. Through this assurance of equality, all the inhabitants of the kingdom will combine in the national struggle, which aims to create a sense of unity.

The dialectics of both the chivalric and the historical romances intermingle the notions of good kingship and government with national discourse. Nationalism is connected with a country's freedom from the suzerainty of another nation. Inevitably, then, feudal utterances are necessarily assimilated within the national ideal. In the historical romances, good illustrations of this are James Douglas's evolution in *The Bruce* or the mutation of value in Bruce himself through Wallace's guidance in *The Wallace*; whereas, in the Scottish *romans courtois*, the chivalric and courtly action remains subservient to royal ambitions. This causes a series of alterations in the adaptation of the French originals in the chivalric romances. This emphasises the issues concerning the Kingdom of Scotland.

CHAPTER 2

THE REPRESENTATION OF KNIGHTHOOD AND CHIVALRY IN THE SCOTTISH HISTORICAL ROMANCES

Introduction

The historical proximity of Robert I and William Wallace imposed a set of constraints on the representation of knighthood and chivalry in Barbour's *Bruce* and Hary's *Wallace*.[71] Unlike the English Charlemagne Romances adapted from French epics, for example, in which the figures of the Frankish Emperor and the twelve peers were freely reshaped in the context of the fight against the heathen,[72] the national component inherent to *The Bruce* and *The Wallace* constituted an inescapable starting point for the two *makars*.

Barbour's *Bruce* will be analysed first. Barbour had Scottish texts — now lost — which he might have employed as models, but he was also familiar with the ancient classics as well as French and Anglo-Norman literature. It will be suggested, however, that the *makar's* romance served to establish a post Wars of Independence vernacular tradition in Scots in the manner of France and England. His work will help to elucidate

[71] General and not completely accurate though they might be, it is convenient to outline the different definitions of "romance" which are going to be used in the second and third chapters. First, in its broader meaning, "romance" can be regarded as a narrative text written in the late Middle Ages: "as a genre [which] was separated from epic or allegory, though it had elements of both. It allowed a casual interplay with history and miracle" (Beer 1970: 17). Second, in this chapter, I shall mainly refer to "historical romance," whose main concern is to recreate historical or pseudo-historical events following and transforming the rhetorical, thematic and structural devices of chivalric romances. These chivalric romances or *romans courtois*, I shall analyse in the next chapter. As Beer describes them, they emphasise the personal enterprise of a single knight's quest in accordance with the courtly code, which "was in its way revolutionary. It subverted the values of feudal society by its emphasis on love without bargains [*fin'amors*], its fantasy of female dominance, its individualism and its paradoxical legalism which piquantly appropriated the language of authority while undermining authoritarian assumptions." (Beer 1976: 23)

[72] As Zumthor asserts, "on pourrait aussi bien, en remontant plus haut dans le passé, citer la ré-interprétation que firent les créateurs de la chanson de geste, de souvenirs carolingiens sous l'impact des premières croisades, d'où la généralisation du type de Sarrasins et du « thème » de la chrétienté." (Zumthor 1972: 22)

the main literary characteristics that he endeavoured to implant as bases of the Scottish tradition. Barbour opts to focus on epic action rather than on more embellished depiction of jousts and tournaments. The negotiation between epic and courtly virtues is also subordinated to the historical context of Robert I's life. This does not mean that the typical *topoi* of romance literature are ignored or replaced, but rather that they are reinterpreted and sometimes even subverted. Furthermore, the social portrayal of courtly life and personal interactions between members of the same or the opposite sex will be examined. Broadly, "romance writers [...] enlarged another dimension of the model of the ideal knight, his *courtoisie*, laying an emphasis on courtly and civilised behaviour worthy of a society that was becoming more refined in literature" (Keen 1984: 33). It will be argued, however, that, although Barbour makes a formal deployment of the vocabulary of *cortesia*, the overall elaboration of the plot does not allow for the poetic colourfulness of works such as those by Chrétien de Troyes. This distinctive approach generates an idiosyncratic redefinition of the chivalric code.

Analysis of the same elements in Hary's *Wallace* will further help to trace the evolution of the Scottish romances in the domain of historical or pseudo-historical texts. As mentioned in chapter one, Hary was writing at the time of the great *makars*. They were all enormously influenced by Chaucer, who together with "his friends and his disciples all read French and were steeped in the [French] tradition" (Calin 1994: 272). In the time in which *The Wallace* was written, then, the direct or indirect influence of a larger number of French works and the burden of the Chaucerian tradition conditioned the form of Hary's romance. The chivalric and knightly aspects of Hary's model, *The Bruce*, were necessarily transformed. Finally, the prevalence and development of different literary conventions in Scottish historical romances will be discussed.

Barbour's *Bruce:* Forging a Tradition

Schwend regards *The Bruce* "as the first original venture in Scottish vernacular literature, the first to break loose from the tradition of the old romance. Barbour has no predecessor in his line of poetry" (Schwend 1986: 207-08). Nevertheless, such an outstanding and enthusiastic affirmation should be reconsidered. Although I shall argue that John Barbour's text served to found a national literary tradition after the political effects of the Wars of Independence, there were earlier models to which the Archdeacon of Aberdeen could revert. And even if there were no evidence at all of written romances in the vernacular in Scotland, it would not be too adventurous to presume that, like any other centre of power in late medieval Europe, in Scotland there existed the promotion of cultural activities either written, oral or theatrical a long time before Barbour.

Indeed, from the scanty surviving evidence, it can be deduced that romances in Scots were recited in the Scottish court before the fourteenth century. Out of the ten parts of the fullest version of the Old Norse *Karlamagnús saga,* part II *Olif and Landres* seems to have been translated from a romance recited in Scotland. In the Prologue, the author claims that: "Lord Bjarni Erlingsson of Bjarkey found this saga written and told in the English language, in Scotland, when he stayed there during the winter after the death of King Alexander" (I. 178). Hieatt argues that textual evidence suggests its closeness to the original:

> phrase after phrase is repeated, or inserted in a parenthetical aside, in a manner reminiscent of the metrical romance, [...] some phrases are clearly metrical fillers, and fall oddly in a prose translation, [...] in some other sections of the translation there are repetitions with something of an

incremental quality. (Hieatt [ed] 1975: 164-65)

Therefore, this presupposes a very close translation of the text in English used as a model. From the content of the Icelandic saga, it can be deduced that the author of the romance was simply translating a French text, now also lost.

In their edition of *The Bruce*, McDiarmid and Stevenson as well as referring to the Charlemagne romance translated in the *Karlamagnús saga*, which was "obtained by the Scottish court in 1286 by the Maid of Norway's envoy," also allude to the existence of "Thomas Rimour's story of the loves of Tristram and Iseult (c. 1300)," which is now lost (McDiarmid and Stevenson 1981-85: 14).[73] Barbour, as a cultivated man of letters, may have been familiar with both of them and with other works from which no evidence has survived.

Notwithstanding the existence of those romances, when commissioned to compose *The Bruce*, John Barbour created the literary bases for a new tradition after the Wars of Independence. The fact that he was writing shortly after those wars, when, as argued in the first chapter, Scottish nationalism was growing, made him realise the need to establish a new and distinctive literary identity. He ingeniously adapted many *loci communes* of romances and epic poetry. In using Early Scots, which comes from the Old English spoken in Northumbria and Southern Scotland, he also deployed some elements of English literature such as alliterative verse, especially in set phrases like "wycht and wys" (I. 22).[74] French and Anglo-Norman texts and literary motifs also served as models

[73] McDiarmid and Stevenson do not seem to identify the surviving *Sir Tristrem* with the Scottish text. In its first edition, Sir Walter Scott pleaded the Scottishness of the text (Scott [ed] 1806: 48-49), whereas some years later McNeill suggested that the poem could have been written either in the north of England or in Scotland (McNeill, [ed] 1886: xxxiii). More recent scholars, however, have been inclined to situate the poem in the North of England (McIntosh 1989: 85-95) or even further down in the Midlands. (Rumble 1959: 228)

[74] Turville-Petre explains that "it is a striking feature of the alliterative style that words are paired and grouped together in a predictable way, and that as a result one line often recalls lines from other poems." (Turville-Petre 1977: 83)

that the author redefined according to his project. In them, the warriors' life transcended the purely violent and bloody effects of combats to be elevated to the realm of refinement and heroism as expressed in books of chivalry. These were actually used by real knights who endeavoured to live according to their doctrines. Apart from Barbour's knowledge of fourteenth-century French romances, in Bruce's speeches before battles there are traces of his familiarity with *Le Roman d'Alixandre* (McDiarmid and Stevenson [ed] 1981-85: I. n44). As for Anglo-Norman, Legge points out that the the version of the romance of *Fierabras* recited by Barbour, when he and his men are crossing Lomond, corresponds to the Anglo-Norman text (Legge 1969: 9). She also remarks that Sir Gray Heton started his *Scalachronica* while in prison at Edinburgh Castle. This demonstrates that either there was an important library in the castle, or books were easy to obtain by anyone dwelling there, including noble prisoners (Legge 1969: 9-10). Therefore, even if one discounts the time he spent in France, Barbour had access to texts in Scots, French, Latin, Anglo-Norman and English in Scotland.

That the *makar* spent some time studying in Paris[75] (McDiarmid and Stevenson [ed] 1981-85: I. 5) implies that he was certainly familiar with idealised portrayals of chivalry. Although his concrete knowledge of authors such as Geoffrey of Charny and Ramon Llull cannot be categorically stated, Llull and Charny will be employed as illustrations of standard views of chivalry.[76] For example, "Geoffrey de Charny, in his *Livre de*

[75] It is also suggested that Barbour "may also have spent a year or two in the University of Orléans in the faculty of civil law (this study being palpably prohibited at Paris), a speculation that is attractive in several counts. Orléans had a tradition of respect for the Latin poets; two commentaries on Lucan's libertarian epic *De Bello Civili* had been produced there, and lines from it are remembered in the *Bruce*." (McDiarmid and Stevenson [ed] 1981-85: 5)

[76] The fact that Barbour studied in Paris, however, indicates that he may have come across any of these two treatises. Llull's *Llibre* was translated into French a short time after its composition in 1275. About eighty years later, Charny completed his *Livre* in the mid 1350's at the French court. (Kaeuper and Kennedy [ed] 1996: 22)

The choice of Ramon Llull's text is not arbitrary as it stands as one of the most important chivalric treatises of the late Middle Ages:

> From a lost Latin translation, the French version of the *Llibre d'orde de cavalleria* was

chevalerie, offers us a model of the chivalrous man which we ought to be able to recognise from real life" (Keen 1984: 18). Ramon Llull defines the role of the knight as follows:

> Offici de cavayler és mantenir e deffendre la sancta fe cathòlica. [...] Offici de cavayler és mantenir e deffendre senyor terrenal, cor rey, ni príncep ni nuil alt baró, sens ajuda, no poria mantenir detrura en ses gents. [...] Offici de cavayler és mantenir terra, cor per la paor que les gents an dels cavaylers, dubten a destruir les terras. [...] Offici de cavayler és mantenir vilves, òrfens, homes despoderats; cor, enaxí con és custuma e rahó que los majors ajuden a deffendre los menors.[77] (Llull 1988: 173-81)

This lofty culture was to be reflected in the chivalric and epic literature of the late Middle Ages. Nevertheless, when it comes to Scotland, although the vocabulary and conventions of knightly warfare are always retained, the *makars* tend to reinterpret these notions in a way which is common to all romances. *The Bruce*, for instance, is a paradigmatic illustration of this:

> The characteristic terminology of romance is used, words like 'chewalry', 'leaute', 'pite', 'curtesy' but their meanings are given to them by the circumstances of war and not by literary convention. (McDiarmid and

composed. The French text is preserved in ten fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts, from which there were many printed editions in the sixteenth century. From this French version, a Scottish translation (1456) and an English one by William Caxton were composed. (Riquer 1964: I. 252-53) (My translation)

In fact, Llull's influence can be seen on Charny's book where "some close verbal parallels (as well as [...] broad themes) connect Charny's work with Llull's." (Kaeuper and Kennedy [ed] 1996: 27)

[77] In Haye's translation: "first and formast, knychthede was ordanyit to manetene and defend haly kirk, and the faith, [...] The office alssua of knychthede aw to defend his naturale lord, and manetene him; for a king is bot a man allane but his men; and but tham thare may na king governe, na deffend his peple. [...] Office of knychtis is to manetene and governe landis and policy, and to defend thame; for the raddour and the drede that the peple has of knychtis, thai byde apon thair craftis and labouragis, and grathis lyfting for the lordis, for dout to be undone, destroyit, and desertit. [...] Office of knychthede is to mantene and defend wedowis, maidenis, faderles and moderles barnis, and pore miserable personis and piteable, and to help the wayke agayne the stark." (Haye 1901-1914: II. 18-27)

Stevenson [ed] 1981-85: I. 45)

This does not mean that Barbour fails to take advantage of the archetypal *topoi* of epic and romance. Rather he adapts them to the requirements of his composition.

Barbour employs the *loci communes* of the Nine Worthies and of *sapientia et fortitudo* with the purpose of extolling the hero's virtues. Bruce is conveniently associated with the Nine Worthies on several occasions. Among the most frequently repeated allusions, the most interesting, in literary terms, is the one connecting Balliol's treason to the classical betrayals of Antiquity and the Nine Worthies. First, Barbour refers to Troy (I. 521-26); then, to "Alexander ye conqueroure", who was "dystroyit throw pwsoune" (I. 529-35); followed by Julius Caesar (I. 537-48) and Arthur (I. 549-60). The *makar* accomplishes two objectives at the same time. First, he matches Bruce's *proeza* with that of the heroes mentioned, marking him the Tenth Worthy. In the same way as the heroes of the Matter of Rome, France and Britain, Bruce, symbolically the Tenth Worthy,[78] becomes the central hero of the newly created Matter of Scotland.[79] Secondly, the writer's similes symbolically place Balliol's treason on the same level as the classical ones as a result of Bruce's worth. The *makar* also assumes that Balliol's betrayal of Scotland is a betrayal of Bruce himself. Bruce is symbolically transformed into the emblem of free Scotland. In this way, "throughout the work, Barbour makes constant reference to historical

[78] Obviously, contemporary French and English writers have their own national candidates to become the Tenth Worthy.

[79] Indeed, it is quite common among Scottish writers of the period to portray Robert Bruce as the Tenth Worthy. As we can see in the late medieval poem *Ane Ballat of the Nine Nobles*, the author, after devoting nine stanzas to each of the Worthies, concludes in this way:

> Robert the Brois throu hard feichtyng
> With few venkust the mychthy Kyng
> Off Ingland, Edward, twyse in fycht,
> At occupit his realme but rycht
> At sum tyme wes set so hard,
> At hat nocht sax till hym toward.
> 3e gude men that thir balletis redis,
> Deme quha dochtyast was in dedis.
> (Laing [ed] 1895: I. 303)

incident, both biblical and classical, as a means of bringing Scottish experience into the line of 'universal' experience." (Kinghorn 1968-69: 134)

As for the *sapientia et fortitudo topos*, Kliman affirms that, in his portrayal of Bruce's progression as the Scottish leader, Barbour also constructs an image of the sovereign in which his *sapientia* and *fortitudo* are stressed (Kliman 1975: 151). Curtius defines this *topos* in the following manner:

> Like the physician is skilled in medicine [*sic*], the omen-reading priest, the bard, and the craftsman who produces works of art, the hero as sage and warrior is the basic type of Homeric anthropology. The combination of courage and wisdom appears, as we see, in two basic forms: on a higher level as "heroic virtue" and on a lower level as "soldierly virtue." (Curtius 1990: 172)

Were one to place Bruce within Curtius' schema, he would certainly appear in the "higher level: heroic virtue." After the Scottish monarch's defeat and escape at Methven, the Lord of Lorne and his army pursue the king. At first, Bruce tries to fight the enemy, but he soon realises that such an enterprise would be suicidal. Therefore, he tells his soldiers:

> [...] "lordyngis foly it war
> Tyll ws for till assembill mar,
> For yai fele off our hors has slayn,
> And gyff yhe fecht with yaim agayn
> We sall tyne off our small meng3e
> And our selff sall in perill be.
> Yarfor me thynk maist awenand

To withdraw ws ws defendand

Till we cum owt off yar daunger,

For owr strenth at our hand is ner."

(III. 35-44)

"The Bruce is a leader who can inspire his men to heroic action because he is a master of war (*fortitudo*) and also because he knows how to use the art of rhetoric (*sapientia*)" (Kliman 1975: 156). Although I agree with Kliman's affirmation as a whole, it would be convenient to redefine the two concepts within late medieval literature. *Sapientia*, as well as referring to "the art of rhetoric," also includes the military capacity to lead an army, whereas *fortitudo* can be regarded as strength both on the physical and moral/spiritual levels. This *topos* is characteristic of classical epic literature going back to Homer's and Virgil's works (Curtius 1990: 171-74).[80] Barbour adapts Bruce's characterisation to the heroic requirements of both romance (the Nine Worthies) and epic (*fortitudo et sapientia*). The King of Scots becomes the perfect incarnation of a national epic leader and a chivalric hero within a specifically Scottish romance. Barbour merges both traditions in the imaginary but historicised construction of Bruce.

At the same time, after Methven, Bruce begins to learn how and when he should confront the English. As in archetypal chivalric romances, the hero must experience a process of learning before becoming the best knight (or king, in his case). Indeed, it is absolutely indispensable for Bruce to obtain new awareness from experience, if he wants to vanquish a superior enemy. It is also remarkable that, in the passage quoted above, the use of the word "foly" (the negative counterpart of *temperance*) turns out to be of the greatest importance. Instead of showing Bruce as a weak king who refuses to face the

[80] Interestingly, this *topos* is rarely celebrated in medieval epic. A good illustration of this is the twelfth-century French adaptation of the *Aeneid*, in which what Virgil presents as *sapientia* — obedience to the gods — is seen as a source of shame for the hero.

enemy, Barbour structures the king's speech in a way in which his *temperance* and *prudence* are stressed.[81] In fact, the narrative voice concludes that "Yen yai withdrew yaim halely, / Bot yat wes nocht full cowartly" (III. 45-46); that is to say, Barbour asserts what he has already implied in the previous lines. Thus, as well as unveiling his *sapientia* and *fortitudo* (according to Kliman), Bruce's speeches also enlighten his *temperance* and *prudence*. These three attributes together with his necessary commitment to *justice*[82] define Robert Bruce as possessing the four Cardinal Virtues. As a result, he is the Elect: the best knight and king to defend Scotland's interests in accordance with chivalric standards.

About James Douglas, the second most important hero in *The Bruce,* McKim says that he is also represented as an ideal knight:

> Particular stress is placed on the military virtues, prowess, loyalty and generosity, on what have been called the three 'primary' virtues of chivalry, that is, virtues derived from the original military character of the chivalric code (McKim 1981: 172).

She further claims that Douglas' heroism is closer to that of "the *chanson de geste* in which the hero is chiefly renowned for his physical strength" rather than that of the romance tradition (McKim 1981: 174).[83] Therefore, just as in the case of Bruce, the *makar* projects an image of Douglas in which epic and romance traits define the hero.

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[81] "Tot cavayler deu saber les .VII. virtuts qui són raïl e començament de totes bones custumes e són vies e carreres de la celestial glòria perdurable. De les quals .VII. virtuts, són les .III. teologicals, e les .IIII. cardenals. Les theologicals són fe, sperança, caritat. Les cardenals són justícia, prudència, fortitudo, temprança" (Llull 1992: XXVI. b). In Hay's translation: "all knycht or he tak ordre suld knaw all the vii vertues, and thair branchis; that is to say, the four vertues cardinale, and the thre vertues theological. The thre theological is faith, good hope, and cheretee, as we have before touchit. The four cardinale vertues ar justice, temperance, fors, and prudence." (Haye 1901-14: II. 52)

[82] As cited from Aquinas in the first chapter, to be a good monarch, Bruce must exercise *justice* and *mercy*.

[83] She seems to imply that, although the romance heroes of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are also praised for their physical *fortitude*, Douglas' courtly attributes are not extensively developed.

This amalgamation of both traditions serves to accomplish a paramount objective: the chivalric deeds of arms are no longer exclusively at the service of personal fulfilment and promotion but must contribute to the epic (or national) enterprise.

Although McKim focuses mainly on physical virtues, it would be appropriate to note that Barbour's emphasis is not only placed on them. Even in his portrayal of James Douglas (the toughest and strongest knight on the field), the *makar* does not neglect his spiritual side. In Seville, Douglas politely refuses all the riches that King Alfonso offers him on the grounds that:

> [...] he tuk yat waiage
> To pas in-till pilgrimage
> On Goddis fayis, yat his trawaill
> Mycht till his saule hele awaill,
>
> (XX. 353-56)

By the end of the romance, the most ferocious warrior against the English advances to a more profound understanding of knighthood in his defence of the faith against the heathen. As Llull claims in his *Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria*:

> D'on, enaxí con totes aquestas usanses demunt dites pertanyen a cavayler quant al cors, enaxí justícia, sauiesa, caritat, leyaltat, veritat, humilitat, fortitudo, sperança e spertesa, e les altres virtuts semblants a aquestas pertanyen a cavayler quant a la ànima.[84] (Llull 1988: 177)

Therefore, it is necessary to maintain a balance between bodily and spiritual attributes to be a good knight. The exclusive reliance on physical qualities would make a ruthless

[84] In Haye's translation: "rycht sa is thare othir proprieteis pertenand to the saule; as justice, force, prudence, and temperaunce, charitee and veritee, lautee and humilitee, faith, esperaunce, subtilitee, agilitee, and with all othir vertues touchand to wisedome, appertenis till him, as to the saule." (Haye 1901-1914: II. 23)

warrior, but never a Christian knight.[85]

Other romance motifs are employed by Barbour and relocated in the field of the national discourse. A good illustration of this is the typical sportive rivalry between two knights serving the same lord:

> Yis tyme yat ye gud erle Thomas
> Assegyt as ye lettre sayis
> Edinburgh, Iames off Douglas
> Set all his wit for to purchas
> How Roxburch throw sutelte
> Or ony craft mycht wonnyn be,
>
> (X. 357-62)

In the fashion of the *roman courtois* and epic traditions, Barbour counterbalances Moray's and Douglas' actions. Once again, the major difference from chivalric romances lies in the fact that their deeds of arms go far beyond personal *fame* since they decisively help with his king's main goal: the liberation of Scotland.

Consistent with this idea, Barbour overtly censors Edward Bruce's mistaken knightly attitude. His demeanour serves as a contrast with that of Bruce (Kliman 1973: 480; Goldstein 1993: 203), and of Douglas and Moray after they have joined the King of Scots' cause.[86] Robert's brother is shown to be primarily motivated by his own individual quest rather than by the interests of his nation. This weakness is only revealed latterly. Before Bannockburn, Edward's conduct is exemplary. In Book V, for instance,

[85] I am aware that this might be a too general and abstract definition of a Christian knight, but in *The Bruce* and in the later Scottish tradition, the religious aspects of knighthood are in one way or other underlined.
[86] This contrast between *foudatz* and *temperance* is thematically similar to Hotspur's daredevil *proeza* and Hal's wisdom in *Henry IV, Part I*. Of course, at a more profound level the contrast Shakespeare proposes is also between the old-fashioned medieval knight and the man of the Renaissance, which obviously would not work with *The Bruce*.

when the king returns to the mainland from Arran, he is told that Lord Percy, one of his enemies, is in a castle nearby with three hundred men at least. The king hesitates whether to attack his foe (V. 1-63). Then, Edward asserts:

> [...] "I say 3ow sekyrly
> Yar sall na perell yat may be
> Dryve me eftsonys to ye se.
> Myne auentur her tak will I
> Quheyir it be esfull or angry."
>
> (V. 66-70)[87]

Thanks to Edward's daring suggestion, the Scots vanquish Lord Percy and his men. Edward can only be fêted in so far as his decision contributes to the Scottish enterprise.

Afterwards, however, his excessive chivalrous determination dangerously increases until his death. Structurally and thematically, Barbour anticipates his downfall from favour just after Bannockburn when he begins condemning his extreme audacity, since Edward starts preferring his personal glory to the common objective of his people. *Foudatz* rather than *sapientia* guides his acts. In Book XVIII, Edward, leader of the Scottish in Ireland, decides to fight a much larger Anglo-Irish army, instead of waiting for the reinforcements, which are about to come. His impatience causes both his death and the failure of Scottish aspirations to conquer the neighbouring island. At a chivalric level, Edward lacks the *temperance* and *sapientia* his brother possesses.[88] At a more

[87] These words of the hero facing his *auenture* (fate, destiny) are very typical of epic poetry. In book IV of the *Aeneid*, for instance, in his departure, Aeneas assumes his fate: "[...] Sed nullis ille mouetur / fletibus aut uoces ullas tractabilis audit; / fata obstant placidasque uiri dues obstruit auris" (*Aeneid* IV. 438-40). In Lonsdale and Lee's translation: "He is not melted by lamentations, nor listens compliantly to any address; fate stands in the way, and heaven stops the unmoved ears of the hero."

[88] This tension is typical of chivalric romances. In the Catalan text *Blandín de Cornualla,* Guillot's excessive zeal for heroic fights denotes the same problem regarding *mesura* and *proeza* as in *The Bruce*. Ramon Llull resolves this conflict in the following way: "Enaxí con cavayler, per nobilitat de coratge, te fa aver ardiment e·t fa menysprear los perills per ço que cavayleria pusques honrar, enaxí orde de cavayleria

religious level, the contrast between his rashness and Bruce's *sapientia* places the confrontation in a spiritual context, which the *makar* always presents in his conception of the romance as a whole.[89] This dichotomy of *sapientia* and foolhardiness is also a *locus communis* of epic poetry which Barbour adapted to the historical context of *The Bruce*. This situation permits the *makar* to justify those instances where patriotic pragmatism drives the Scots into unchivalric behaviour. The poet anticipates a possible negative response on the audience's part and, at the same time, manipulates their reaction. Barbour hopes to persuade them that if they had confronted the English in the same way as Edward faced them in Ireland, they would have been vanquished in the same way as Edward was defeated. Thus, the authorial control of the narrative creates a thematic parallelism which elevates Bruce's accomplishment of his national goal above chivalric action.

On the other hand, in *The Bruce*, the urgency of the Wars of Independence does not allow Barbour to devote any time to festive activities such as tourneys. Interestingly, however, there are records of jousts and tournaments celebrated in Scotland during the late Middle Ages:

> Most of the documented information about duels and jousting [in Scotland] comes from chronicle sources or royal accounts of expenditure. Both of these sources are problematic. Chroniclers usually report only the names of the participants, the length of the tournament, and who won. Royal accounts detail payments to armourers, bowyers and the other workers, with very few

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cové que·s faça amar sauiea e seny" (Llull 1988: 180). In Haye's amplified version of this passage: "And thus is it, that sen the ordre is reuglit be witt and wisdome, than suld all gude knychtis pres theme to be wys, and sett tharon all thair hert and mynde; the quhilk makis knycht sa curageus, that he doubtis nocht the dede, in regarde of honoure and his rychtwis caus, that he may lufe and honour his ordre, to sauf bathe saule and honour, in the contrair of foly and ingnoraunce." (Haye 1901-14: II. 26-27)

[89] The spiritual character of *The Bruce* will be thoroughly analysed in the fourth chapter.

> details. However, there is one source which may describe the details of jousting in the fifteenth century. A manuscript entitled 'The Order of Combats for Life in Scotland', apparently dating from James I's reign. (Stevenson 2003: 148)

This historical circumstance is never reflected in *The Bruce* or any other Scottish romance at all.[90] It is not a characteristic of them to spend much time on descriptions of courtly entertainments, not even in Arthurian romances, in which the author may feel freer to make use of as many literary elements as he wishes. In fact, it is only in *Clariodus* that we find these kinds of activities portrayed. The Scottish romance seems to favour a more martial narrative.

Apart from the historical atmosphere surrounding *The Bruce*, in the socio-political contexts of the times jousting was condemned sometimes:

> The two themes of individualism and public service appear in combination in other contexts too, and some of them are very significant. Jousting was often criticised as the acme of the quest for vainglory. (Keen 1984: 235-36)

In *The Bruce,* the hero's early steps are already marked by warfare — there is no time for training games such as tournaments and jousts — but only for education in war itself. At first, then, as a knight, Robert Bruce tries to wage war on his enemies in a pitched battle at Methven. But the English use of non-chivalric cunning catches them unawares by night (II. 260-300). They are massacred and not many can escape death. Significantly, in keeping with the requisites he has set as his goal, Barbour does not overtly condemn the English for their unchivalric behaviour, as he is going to portray his main hero

[90] What coincides between these records about tournaments and the romances is the few references to female characters: "Women are mostly absent from the records of Scottish tournaments. [...] Most records of tournaments are financial and carry little information about the proceedings, so it is perhaps unsurprising that we find no reference to women." (Stevenson 2003: 184)

performing similar actions, when clearly outnumbered.[91] Thus, the *makar* employs literary strategies to justify the fact that, from then on, the Scots will wage a guerrilla war until they recruit the number of soldiers needed to combat the English in open field.

Such a non-chivalric attitude does not please Randolph, who openly complains about it to his uncle, Robert Bruce. When he is re-captured by the Scots, Bruce very gently asks him to join his men and cause (IX. 741-745). Randolph's response is particularly harsh:

> [...] "ȝe chasty me, bot ȝe
> Aucht bettre chastyt for to be,
> For sene ȝe werrayit ye king
> Off Ingland, in playne fechting
> ȝe suld pres to derenȝhe rycht
> And nocht with cowardy na with slycht."
>
> (IX. 747-52)

By urging Bruce to defend his right in "playne fechting" and not with cowardice and trickery, Randolph is not challenging his uncle's right to the Scottish Crown, but just the non-chivalric means he is using to attain his objective. In short, as a knight, he is totally against the Scottish guerrilla warfare, since it is not the way in which a nobleman should fight. At this point, the earl of Moray, who, after being captured at Methven, has been fighting on the English side, does not quite understand the Scottish position. But finally, he comes to realise that this is the only way in which his people can defeat the powerful and much more numerous English army. As Kliman remarks, in the siege of Edinburgh, Randolph himself makes use of stratagems to take the castle (Kliman 1973: 492). As in

[91] Kliman points out, however, that, "while it is shameful that the mighty English decline an open engagement, the much smaller Scots force can compensate for their very real lack of might by judicious use of *slicht*." (Kliman 1975: 153)

the case of Edward Bruce, by representing the change of mind of the king's nephew, the author implicitly justifies the use of guerrilla tactics before his courtly audience. Randolph, then, plays a mediating role between the author and the audience since Barbour uses him to induce the courtly listeners to think that the national liberty of Scotland is much more important than the forms. In so far as the poet deals with harsh reality, idealised descriptions have to be placed in the background sometimes: "his [Barbour's] limits of the courtly ideal are truly significant, because while the courtly ideal bears the seeds of its own decay in its elevated idealism, [...] the heroes of Barbour's *Bruce*, the embodiment of a practical chivalry, are models that the Scots could follow." (Kliman 1973: 507)

Although the members of the Third Estate are by definition excluded from knightly deeds and ideals, they play a much larger part in *The Bruce* than either social or literary convention normally permitted. Despite the fact that the validity of the medieval division of labour may be questioned in virtue of its excessive rigidity, it seems legitimate to maintain this theoretical standpoint in regard to literature, inasmuch as serious literature in the late Middle Ages tended to portray an idealised vision of society, however critical that might be. According to this, everyone in society had his/her own role to accomplish; and romances, as a mirror of a hierarchically structured world, reflected this. Thus, in Chrétien's *Chevalier au Lion*, when Calogrenant asks a peasant about where he can find "adventures or some wonder," the latter answers:

> -A che, fait il, faurras tu bien:
> D'aventures ne sai je rien,
> N'onques mais n'en oï parler.
>
> (ll. 367-369)

This is a good illustration of the medieval division of labour. The peasant is not even allowed to know what "adventures" are because he is not supposed to attain chivalric feats of arms.[92] Llull expounds this division in his *Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria*:

> "E cové que les gents aren e caven e traguen mal, per ço que la terra leu los fruyts on viva cavaller e ses bèsties: e que cavayler calvalc e senyoreig e haja benanança d'aquellas coses on sos hòmens han maltret e malenança."[93] (Llull 1988: 169)

As expressed by Duby, "L'important est en effet de repérer, parmi les enchevêtrements, les désordres du monde sublunaire, les axes d'une construction harmonieuse et raisonnable qui paraisse répondre aux desseins du créateur" (Duby 1978: 12). Even more conclusive evidence of this idealised structure (which did not always correspond with the harsh reality of the time) but from the peasant's perspective is to found in Langland's *Piers Plowman*. In *Passus* VI, Piers starts the ploughing before going on the pilgrimage. When a knight offers his services to help him, Piers replies:

> "By Seint Poul!" quod Perkyn, "ye profre yow so faire
> That I shal swynke and swete and sowe for us bothe,
> And othere labours do for thi love al my lif time,
> In convenaunt that thow kepe Holy Kirke and myselve
> Fro wastours and fro wikked men that this world destruyeth;
> And go hunte hardiliche to hares and to foxes,
> To bores and to bukkes that breken down myne hegges,
> And go affaite thi faucons wilde foweles to kille,

[92] It is worth noting an alternative but compatible interpretation of these lines: as implied by the rest of his answer (which is not quoted here), this "peasant" seems to possess supernatural attributes. Hence, for him, *avantures* are just everyday reality.

[93] In Haye's approximate translation: "And ordanyt the peple to labour the ground, to graith lyfing for the knychtis and nobles that war thair governouris and protectouris." (Haye 1901-14: II. 15)

For swiche cometh to my croft and croppeth my whete."

(VI. 24-32)

Piers instructs the knight about how he can help in the ploughing according to his social class. He should not plough as a peasant, but he should defend the peasantry, who in turn work for him. He has also to fight the wicked men and go hunting. Langland adapts the duties of the noble classes to suit the specific task of the ploughing.[94] This is presented as another way of protecting the peasants' interests. A modern reader might have difficulties in understanding Piers' reaction, when the knight wants to plough together with him. Yet, late fourteenth-century audiences would approve of Piers' response,[95] inasmuch as this is the manner in which their ideal vision of society is designed, and the only possible way for it to function correctly.

Although commoners never played central roles in serious *romans courtois*, in *The Bruce* Barbour attaches a lot of importance to their actions. From the beginning, the author equates the suffering of the common folk with that of knights and lords, which supposes an extraordinary innovation regarding the traditional romances of the time. All the people of Scotland must stand together in the defence of their country to attain freedom. In Book II, after the battle of Methven, when the commoners do not follow Bruce, Barbour does not criticise them. He just states the fact that they desert him "[...] for he / Yaim fro yar fais mycht nocht warand" (II. 503-510). The author implies that

[94] I am aware of the fact that in another possible interpretation of these lines, it could be also argued that Piers is being ironic and criticising the knight to devote his time to pleasurable activities (such as hunting) instead of being of any use to society. Nevertheless, Piers is giving the knight the same instructive indications that could be found in a late medieval manual of chivalry. Therefore, Piers can be said to be telling the knight just what he should do. Irony must not necessarily be implied: "[Cavaller deu] córrer cavayl, bohornar, lansar a taulat, enar ab armas, torneys, fer taules radones, esgrimir, cassar [...] cor per totes aquestes coses se acustumen los cavaylers a fet d'armes e a mantenir l'orda de cavayleria" (Llull 1988: 177). In Haye's translation: "Knychtis suld be wele ryddin, and in ȝouthede lere tobe wele ryddin on destrellis and courseris, till haunte justis and tournaymentis, to hald table round, to hunt. [...] As all thir properteis before said pertenis till a knycht. (Haye 1901-14: 23)

[95] William Langland is supposed to have written under the patronage of a lord in conditions similar to those of Chaucer's courtly London.

this is an understandable conduct, since Bruce cannot now fulfil the duty to his subjects. As Kliman points out, "it is a mutual responsibility: the leader must protect and then the commons would be loyal: since Bruce cannot protect them, they desert him" (Kliman 1973: 499).[96] In the same way, when the king comes back to mainland in Book V, the people fear the English so much that they do not collaborate with Bruce who "[...] fand litill tendyrnes" (V. 123-132). Again Barbour excuses the commoners' behaviour. Not until Bruce's victory in the first real pitched battle after Methven, Loudoun Hill, does a considerable number of Scots join the monarch (VIII. 506-511). In spite of his generally practical representation of chivalry, the *makar* conceptually resorts to the chivalric code (Bruce has to prove his *proeza* in a *proper* pitched battle), to be recognised as the leader of Scotland among his countrymen.

Only the English underestimate the Scottish Third Estate: at the battle of Bannockburn, Edward II feels offended when a knight suggests to him that they should withdraw before the attack of the Scottish army on foot:

> "I will nocht," said ye king, "perfay
> Do sa, for yar sall no man say
> Yat I sall eschew ye bataill
> Na withdraw me for sic rangaile."
>
> (XII. 473-476)

But it is precisely this "rangaile's" intervention in Bannockburn that turns out to be vital. Crucially, in the middle of the battle, the commons take the initiative: "ȝoman, swanys,

[96] Although on the whole I agree with Kliman in this point, I would not use the word "desert" but rather I would regard the vassals' attitude as an exercise of their right as their lord cannot fulfil his duty:

> Pourtant, quel que fût le déséquilibre entre les charges de part et d'autre exigées, elles n'en formaient pas moins un tout indissoluble; l'obéissance du vassal avait pour condition l'exactitude du seigneur à tenir ses engagements. Mise en relief dès le XI^{e} siècle par Foubert de Chartres, jusqu'au bout très fortement ressentie, cette réciprocité dans des devoirs inégaux fut le trait vraiment distinctif de la vassalité européenne. (Bloch 1939: 350)

and pitaill," who were minding the victuals, decide to enter the battle, too. This manoeuvre serves to win the decisive battle (XIII. 225-264)[97] in so far as the English cannot distinguish whether they are knights or common folk. Ironically enough, now Edward II must "eschew ye bataill" and "withdraw" if he does not want to be captured. This instance is revealing: in the climax of the romance Barbour undermines the chivalric code by this displacement of roles.

But even before Bannockburn, the author's intention to subvert the chivalric code and highlight the role of the commoners is repeatedly postulated. This same "rangaile" led by Bruce had already defeated Sir Aymer (VIII. 355-370). As a knight, Sir Aymer feels so ashamed after having been vanquished by commoners that he swears he will never come back to Scotland again. At first sight, it might be arguable that Barbour intends to discredit the English leader, since it is uncharacteristic of the genre to see a knight defeated by (or simply fighting) members of the lower classes. Indeed, these interclass confrontations, while abundantly present in comic or carnivalesque fiction, are absent from the vast majority of the serious literature in the Middle Ages.[98] Nevertheless, it is necessary to remark that Sir Aymer's general image is that of a bold knight. Even in the context of his shame, the poet praises him: "[Sir Aymer] yat war renonyt off gret bounte" (VIII. 370). By emphasising the enemy's "gret bounte," the *makar* places even more value on the contribution of the Scottish Third Estate to victory.

As well as praising them as a group, Barbour also describes the common folk as individuals performing feats of arms, just as knights would. The Scottish leaders have no

[97] Kliman suggests that "the importance of the baggage-carriers (XII, 226-64), found only in Barbour, may have been inspired by Vegetius who says that the ancient Romans 'ranged the baggage [...] in the same manner as the regular troops under particular ensigns' with their own leaders (III. vi)" (Kliman 1975: 158).
[98] In the Scottish tradition, the *Taill of Rauf Coilyear* is a good illustration of this, in which not only does Rauf *teach* a very particular understanding of *cortesia* to Charlemagne, but he is very eager to combat Roland and an Arabian emir.

qualms about working together with those, whose local knowledge of the country[99] and willing collaboration is decisive in the taking of strongholds. For example, in the taking of Edinburgh Castle, Randolph (who had previously opposed guerrilla warfare) asks:

> Giff ony man mycht fundyn be
> yat couth fynd ony iuperty
> To clymb ye wallis preuely
> And he suld hace his warysoun,
>
> (X. 528-31)

Unlike in paradigmatic chivalric romances, then, the knight is disposed to follow an inferior's advice, ignoring class distinction. Indeed, had it not been for William Francis' knowledge of a secret way to climb the walls, Edinburgh would not have been taken.

There are many other illustrations in which the commoners act in a heroic manner, either advising or leading their own *troop*. This displaces the roles traditionally associated with knights exclusively. By showing this, Barbour connotes the importance of every single Scot, no matter to what social class she or he belongs. As Kliman points out, "he [Barbour] names commoners and gives them as well as nobles important actions because his theme is national freedom and because nationalism, by definition, involves the participation of all classes"[100] (Kliman 1973-74: 113). Likewise, in the English party, Sir Ingram de Umphraville also praises the courage of the Scottish peasantry at war: "[...] ilk 3owman is sa wicht / Off his yat he is worth a knyght" (XIX. 165-166), he tells the king. Umphraville, "who seems so often to be Barbour's voice" in the poem (Kliman

[99] As opposed to the knightly *sapientia* of the king, ornamented with numerous rhetorical tropes, the commoners' knowledge is based on their own life experience and the use of cunning.

[100] This integrative nationalism to which Kliman refers must be understood within the context of the Wars of Independence, not as the rather class movement associated with the bourgeoisie, which appeared in Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Evidently, the latter did not include the lower classes.

1973: 485), elevates the military significance of the common folk to that of knightly warriors. That is to say, he attaches the same worth both to knights and the Third Estate in the defence and liberation of Scotland, again subverting the most elemental chivalric conventions.

After analysing the portrayal of knighthood in *The Bruce*, the social aspects of knightly life, chivalry and *cortesia*, will be discussed. Owing to the martially centred narrative, the concept of *cortesia* differs from what a reader normally encounters in archetypal French chivalric romances. This also modifies the representation of *largeza* and *fin'amors*, which must be adapted to the structural, stylistic and thematic methodologies of the text. Indeed, courtly scenes are scanty and sporadic because the minimal presence of female characters impedes a further development of courtly action.[101] Hence, as demonstrated earlier, the hero's virtues are mainly defined in martial terms, while their courtly attributes only feature when the male characters are accompanied by a woman.

The urgency of warfare does not leave room for many actions driven by an unselfish sense of *largeza*, but the concept is clearly adapted to the Scottish political circumstances in realistic terms.[102] The rewarding of individuals who have excelled in particular

[101] In *The Buik of Alexander* (*c.* 1428), in which Barbour's influence is manifest, the anonymous *makar* does not seem to enjoy courtly scenes either. As McDiarmid remarks, "where the Scots writer is less happy is in his rendering of the very formal love-talk of ladies with their knights." (McDiarmid in Jack [ed] 1989: 31)

[102] Froissart presents a similar practical vision of *largeza* in his treatment of Edward III. After chasing and fighting the Scots unsuccessfully, the tired and demoralised English knights receive some material compensation from Edward:

> Là donna le roi congé à toutes manières de gens de raller chacun en son lieu; et remercia grandement les comtes, les barons et les chevaliers, du service qu'ils lui avoient fait; [...] et delivrèrent les Hainuyers leurs chevaux, qui tous étoient enfondus et affoulés, au conseil du roi, et fit chascun somme pour lui de ses chevaux morts et vifs et de ses frais. Si en fit le roi sa dette envers monseigneur Jean de Hainaut, et le dit messire Jean s'en obligea envers tous les compagnons; car le roi et son conseil ne purent sitôt recouvrer de tant d'argent que les chevaux montoient; mais on leur en délivra assez par raison pour payer leurs menus frais, et retourner au pays. (*Chroniques*, I.I. xliv)

knightly feats is common practice. Robert Bruce generously rewards his men either nobles, such as Moray in book IX, or commoners, like Philip the forester in book VIII, when they perform a valiant chivalric deed contributing to the emancipation of the realm. Thus, the hero's *largeza* stems from its practical application in a warrior's daily life. In the vast majority of cases, *largeza* is understood as a reward for good service, which at the same time will symbolically renew the subjects' vow of loyalty and secure future adherence to their respective causes. As in real life, where

> [i]n return for their services, the greater lord had much to offer the knighthood: rewards, whether in form of arms, money or land; or a hand towards a good marriage; or a measure of security in the enjoyment of their states. (Keen 1984: 29)

This "rather utilitarian" view of chivalry (Kinghorn 1968-69: 141) is also reflected in the few courtly scenes in which the hero is involved. Barbour seems to have taken courtly lady helpers from chivalric romances as a reference point to characterise the numerous women who assist the King of Scots. Indeed, the dialogues between these female characters and the king maintain the courtly rhetoric typical of the *roman courtois* tradition:

> "Dame," said ye king, "wald yow me wis
> To yat place quhar yar repair is
> I sall reward ye but lessing,
> For yai ar all off my duelling
> And I rycht blythly wald yaim se
> And swa trow I yat yai wald me."
> "Yhis," said scho, "Schir I will blythly

Ga with 3ow and 3our cumpany

Till yat I schaw 3ow yar repair."

"Yat is inewch my sister fayr,

Now ga we forth-wart," said ye king.

(IV. 478-488)

The general tone of the conversation still captures the flavour of chivalric romances. The language employed also corresponds to the realm of courtly life. At the same time, the lady's offer to accompany Bruce reminds the reader of the *roman courtois* conventions.[103] These scarce courtly scenes operate as the complementary courtly qualities a romance hero must possess according to convention. They develop the representation of the knights fully both in the battlefield and in the company of noblewomen. At any rate, the *makar* does not forget reality as he negotiates between Bruce's *cortesia* and the harsh reality of the Wars of Independence. Bruce offers a reward to the lady in return for the information he is asking. Here again, through figures of rhetoric, Barbour resolves the tension between realistic exposition and courtly ideal by portraying potentially historical facts in a manner in which they still show some of those sophisticated aspects characteristic of their predecessors. [104]

The representation of female commoners also challenges the conventions of Barbour's time as he strikingly adapts the concept of courtesy. The situation in the parturient

[103] Chrétien's *Chevalier de la Charrette* is an archetypal example of lady helpers offering shelter to a knight, as in this scene in which Lancelot and two other knights are very kindly welcome:

Tantost qu'ele [the lady] les pot veoir
S'est contre aus an estant decriee,
A chiere molt joiant et liee
Les salue, et dit: "Bien vaingniez!
Mon ostel voel que vos praigniez,
Herbergiez estes, descendez!"
(ll. 2514-19)

[104] Yet the ladies appearing in *The Bruce* "are not the exalted creatures of the courtly tradition." (Kliman 1973: 479)

laundress' scene (XVI. 270-296), in which a king stops his armies' advance to help a poor pregnant laundress bear the baby in suitable conditions, would never occur in a standard chivalric romance.[105] Such acts of *cortesia* were only expected to take place between knights and ladies as a social exchange between the upper classes, never with an inferior. *The Bruce* is a very rare case in which this concept is transferred to an inter-class relation between King Robert and a commoner. Instead of cataloguing Bruce's conduct as a simple act of mercy towards a member of the Third Estate, the *makar* emphasises Bruce's *cortesia*: "Yis wes a full gret curtasy" (XVI. 293). It is of the greatest significance that the author could have easily ignored this deed, or even converted the laundress into a helpless lady. Indeed, Barbour subverts the convention to present Bruce as a people's king with an egalitarian demeanour towards all Scots.

One of the central themes of the *roman courtois*, the evocation of *fin'amors*, which very often functions as a moving force and the goal of the knight's *avanture* in itself, is entirely absent from Barbour's historical romance.[106] Barbour is not keen to devote time to amorous matters. For this reason, not only are the scenes involving love affairs either extramarital or within the bond of matrimony scarce but, when referred to, they are very schematically depicted.[107] In the *makar's* representation of his heroes, love relationships either historical or fictional are ignored. At most, the reader can find a few hints of the *historical* King of Scots' well-known predilection for enjoying the company of

[105] Kliman objects that this sort of courtesy towards "a pregnant laundress, a camp-follower, one feels, would hardly find a place in any ordinary romance of chivalry" (Kliman 1973: 481). But, she does not go further in the analysis of this scene.

[106] As opposed to *The Bruce*, French romances dealing with historical figures, such as Chandos Herald's *Vie du Prince Noire* or the Anglo-Norman *Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin*, did employ *roman courtois* motifs in their narratives.

[107] Although *fin'amors* and marriage were not traditionally compatible in the poetry of the Troubadours, some French romances use the courtly dialectics when presenting a marital relationship. In Chandos Herald's *Vie du Prince Noire*, for instance, the Black Prince addresses his wife in terms of *fin'amors* just before departing for the Spanish campaign (ll. 2048-2101).

mistresses, who bore him several bastards. The author admits that *en passant*:

> & mony tyme as I herd say
> Throw wemen yat he wyth wald play
> Yat wald tell all yat yai mycht her,
> & swa mycht happyn yat it fell her,
> (V. 543-46)

This is the clearest instance which touches on Bruce's extramarital relationships; but, these references are "rather oblique" (Kliman 1973: 480). Furthermore, the textual composition of the passage favours a practical reading of these "wemen's" role by cataloguing them as informer. This diminishes a more courtly or sexual interpretation. Apart from the author's dismissal of courtly conventions, there is another reason why Barbour does not say anything else relating the hero's multiple affairs. According to Llull:

> "E si justícia e lutxúria son [*sic*] contraris, e cavayleria és per mantenir justícia, doncs cavayler lutxuriós e cavayleria són contraris."[108] (Llull: 1988: 187)

The fact that a knight (and more concretely a *Christian* one) could have several mistresses would also go against the conception of perfect Christian chivalry, implying his lack of *temperance* - here understood in Aristotelian terms as "a virtue, through which men are disposed as the law enjoins towards the pleasures of the body" (Aristotle's *Rhetoric* I. ix. 9).[109] As a result, a knight lacking *temperance* could not be a completely

[108] In Haye's translation: "bresing and othir disordinate lechery discordis with justice [...]." (Haye 1901-1914: 32). My translation of the last sentence follows: "therefore, a lecherous knight and chivalry are opposites." Being a Scots translation from a French translation of a Latin version also composed by Llull, Haye's does not always correspond to the original Catalan.

[109] It is noteworthy that this very moralistic and profoundly Christian vision of chivalry is very typical of the Scottish romances. In fact, that Gilbert of the Haye translated Llull's *Llibre* into Scots reaffirms the Scottish interest for this kind spiritual chivalry. Other romances of the fifteenth century offer a more ironic

ideal knight.

Significantly, the author is not interested in describing *fin'amors* within the morally correct Christian institution of matrimony, either. In chivalric romances, the notion of *fin'amors* began to be developed beyond the poetry of the Troubadours, in which an illicit relation was imagined. The narrative length of *romans* imposed a redefinition of the notion. In them, unlike in a short lyric poem (*canso*), something had to happen. For this reason, they evolved to the extent that the final attainment of *fin'amors* (sometimes as the goal of the knight's *avanture* itself) culminated with the marriage of the *fins amants*. One of the earliest examples of this shift is Chrétien de Troyes' *Erec et Enide* (composed around 1170), in which the love relation between Erec (a knight) and Enide (a single lady) evolved into their marriage.

Barbour, having studied in France, probably at the University of Paris,[110] certainly got to know the French tradition. Had he wished to describe the affection between King Robert and his kidnapped wife, Elizabeth, along the lines of chivalric marital love, thematically he could have structured the plot around the *amor de lonh* tradition. Conversely, the affection between Bruce and his wife is never described. Indeed, from the moment she is captured (IV. 39) until she is liberated (XIII. 693-697), she is not mentioned at all. Being aware of the fact that the presence of *fin'amors* (either marital or extramarital) would not contribute to his main literary and ideological purposes, the poet

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and less moral approach to the subject. In Antoine de la Sale's *Jehan de Saintré*, for example, lust and chivalry are perfectly compatible:

> À lire *Saintré*, on a l'impression d'une contre-épreuve burlesque d'un roman courtois traditionnel, d'une illustration inversée de certaines valeurs que l'auteur chercherait à miner, à travestir, tant les situations développées dans le récit sont peu courtoises. [...] Détournement singulier que ce parcours de la dame des Belles Cousines qui sombre brutalement — l'auteur ne ménage guère les transitions — dans un univers de luxure et de débauche où l'on exalte de la fête des sens et la virilité du moine! (Blanchard [ed] 1995: 8)

[110] Saint Andrews, the first Scottish university, was not founded until 1411. Hence, until then, Scottish students had to leave for England or France to pursue higher education.

does not mind suppressing it completely. "This is characteristic of the Scottish treatment of romance, particularly in the early period. Action, not "'l'élégance sociale,' was the favourite theme in Scotland" (Smith 1934: 18).

The only courtly affair following the canons of *fin'amors* is displaced to the English side. In Book VIII, Douglas manages to trick the garrison guarding the Scottish knight's former castle, "And yai [the Scots] so angryly yaim socht / Yat off thaim all [the English] eschapyt nane" (VIII. 486-87). Among the slain Englishmen, a letter is discovered in the purse of Sir John Webton:

> A lettyr yat him send a lady
> Yat he luffyt per drouery,
> Yat said quhen he had 3emyt a 3er
> In wer as a gud bachiller
> Ye awenturis castell of Douglas
> Yat to kepe sa peralus was
> Yan mycht he weile ask a lady
> Hyr amowris and hyr drouery,
>
> (VIII. 491-98)

Traditionally, in the *roman courtois* the motif of chivalric love-service duly rewarded is associated with the hero. That Barbour shifts the love motif to the English party and mentions the unsuccessful outcome of the enterprise suggests that he is questioning the validity of idealised but too daredevil actions in real warfare. Barbour subverts the *locus communis* of feats of arms rewarded with love. Another of the *topoi* commonly appearing in courtly romances, that of *militia et amor*, is implicitly undermined, too. There is no place for "amowris" and "drouery" in Barbour's literary world.

It has been demonstrated that, when composing *The Bruce*, Barbour was endeavouring to establish a new literary tradition in Scots after the Wars of Independence, which could serve as a mirror for later *makars* to follow. He took and transformed elements from different European traditions, with which he created a distinctive literary practice. He made use of *topoi* of classical epic, French and Anglo-Norman *romans courtois*, English literature and non-preserved Scottish texts. Nevertheless, most of these aspects are redefined according to the author's intentions. Knighthood is represented in the battlefield, whereas *cortesia* lacks the sophistication of the French romances and the connection between *fin'amors* and actual warfare is questioned. Barbour also destabilises some of the basic chivalric conventions by portraying the common folk performing valiant feats of arms in war. Similarly, he has no qualms about describing the king himself showing his courtesy towards a laundress. What Barbour could not know was that the major influence on later *makars*, Geoffrey Chaucer, was starting his career as a writer, which was going to last for about twenty-five years more. How could this new tradition survive under the shadow of Chaucer? How were these new literary elements going to be adapted in the Scottish romances throughout the remainder of the late Middle Ages? These questions will be investigated in this and the next chapters by referring to the other long Scottish romances.

Hary's *Wallace*: Prevalence and Evolution

Hary's *Wallace* inevitably invites comparison to Barbour's *Bruce*. Indeed, as mentioned in the general introduction, Hary's indebtedness to Barbour is unanimously

recognised by scholars.[111] Nevertheless, the composition of *The Wallace* about one hundred years after *The Bruce* situates the romance in a totally different literary and socio-historical context.[112] Barbour was not Hary's only influence, either:

> He [Hary] was a diligent student of histories, both vernacular, Latin and French. Barbour, Wyntoun, Bower, Froissart are only the certainly identified chroniclers that he consulted. He read the more popular didactic or informative writings of his day, such as Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, the pseudo-Aristotle's *Secrees*, *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, saints' Legends, perhaps some treatises of astrology, [...] Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and *Canterbury Tales* and minor poems — that very clever astrological conceit, *The Compleynt of Mars*, seems to have been particularly admired — were closely studied by him. (MacDiarmid [ed] 1968: I. xxxvii-xxxviii)

Although some of his readings such as *De Consolatione* or saints' legends coincide with those of Barbour, it is evident that Hary's range of literary influences differs very much from that of the Archdeacon. The sole mention of Chaucer and his impact on the fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century *makars* presupposes a very distinct approach to literature from that of Barbour.[113] It will be, therefore, necessary to examine the manner

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[111] Hary borrowed scenes and phrases from *The Bruce*. The anonymous writer of *The Buik of Alexander* also imitated and copied the Archdeacon of Aberdeen largely (McDiarmid in Jack [ed] 1989: 31-32). This is the reason why for many years this work was erroneously attributed to John Barbour.

[112] As Goldstein suggests, by the time of the composition of the Wallace, "Scottish literature had come a long way since Barbour. Tastes had developed for new kinds of writing, and Hary's poem bears witness to many of those changes." (Goldstein 1993: 257)

[113] Although it is true that Chaucer's first works, such as *The Book of the Duchess*, are slightly prior or contemporary to *The Bruce*, it is obvious that, at such an early stage of his career, Chaucer's reputation was not as widespread in Scotland as in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries:

> Chaucer influenced immediately and profoundly the English tradition, so that the bulk of the more pretentious fifteenth-century English verse was Chaucerian; his influence on Scottish verse was slower and less overwhelming, so the pre-Chaucerian ways of writing were still fashionable in Scotland in the fifteenth century. (Fox in Brewer [ed] 1966: 166)

in which the distinctive elements deployed by Barbour prevail and/or evolve in Hary's portrayal of knighthood, chivalry and *cortesia*. The *makar's* construction of the hero's *proeza*, his approach to the Third Estate and the treatment of female characters will serve to provide evidence for all this.

Although themes such as *cortesia* and *fin'amors* are not profusely elaborated or at the core of the narrative, *The Wallace* offers a more developed approach to them than *The Bruce*. When it comes to Wallace's treatment of female characters, Hary offers a different vision, which, according to Goldstein, helps to project the image of the protagonist fully (Goldstein 1993: 253). While his concern with the national struggle is still present, the knight's stubborn unforgiving demeanour is softened to suit the requirement of *cortesia*. In Book IV, for instance, his affair with a woman (her social status is not revealed) is discovered. The English tempt her to betray Wallace in return for a reward:

> "Giff thou will help to bring 3on rebell doun
> We sall the mak a lady off renoun."
> Thai gaiff till hyr baith gold and siluir brycht
> And said scho suld be weddyt with ane knycht,
>
> (IV. 723-26)

She cannot resist temptation and sells her lover. However, she repents and confesses this betrayal to Wallace that "I haiff 3ou sald [...]" (IV. 760). Up to this juncture, the reader/listener has learned about the hero's attitude towards foes and traitors: pitiless revenge was the norm. The only traitor he forgives is Bruce himself only because he is aware of the future King of Scots' *avanture*.

Notwithstanding his previous way of action, Wallace demonstrates his *cortesia* for the

first time:

> "Will god I sall eschape this tresoune fals.
>
> I the forgyff with-outyn wordis mair."
>
> He kissyt hir, syne tuk his leiff to fayr.
>
> (IV. 770-72)

This courtly demeanour seems to imply not only Wallace's conception as a romance hero, but also his awareness that the world of war is different from the world of *amors* and court. He understands that manly and vengeful deeds in the battlefield must be transformed into courtly manners when dealing with women. The forgiveness accompanied by a kiss reveals a side of Wallace which the author will deploy as a recurrent pattern of behaviour in the few scenes where there is interaction between the opposite sexes.

If in *The Bruce* the main character's marriage is totally secondary to the action, in *The Wallace* Hary elaborates that of the hero along the lines of *fin'amors* as adapted to epic poetry. The introductory portrait of Wallace's future wife combines the archetypal qualities of the courtly damsel — youth, high birth and *gentilesse*:

> In Lanryk duelt a gentill woman thar,
>
> A madyn myld, as my buk will declar,
>
> Off xviii ȝeris ald or litill mor off age.
>
> Als born scho was till part off heretage.
>
> Hyr fadyr was of worschipe and renoune
>
> (V. 579-83)

The author then tells us that both her father and her brother have been killed by the English. The courtly scene merges with the national cause. Faced by this lady, Wallace

falls in love immediately:

> Apon a day to the kyrk as scho went
>
> Wallace hyr saw as he his eyne can cast.
>
> The prent off luff him punȝeit at the last
>
> So asprely, throuch bewte off that brycht,
>
> With gret wnes in presence bid he mycht.
>
> He knew full weyll hyr kynrent and hyr blud.
>
> (V. 604-09)

The passage is not so conventional as it may seem at first. The fact that he sees her for the first time at church should not be overlooked. As well as being the perfect Christian place to meet a damsel, the holy venue, which is always so powerful in the romance, suggests that God approves of their relationship. Apart from her "bewte," there are other aspects of the young woman which attract Wallace. Although the reference to "hyr kynrent" and "hyr blud" is a *locus communis* of both epic and romance adaptations of *fin'amors*, the political overtones of the national struggle reappear once again in what was theoretically a courtly and stereotypical passage.

A common conflict of epic poetry appears when Wallace thinks about marrying her. He cannot reconcile his *avanture* with his love.[114] Temporarily, he renounces love in favour of his duty to liberate Scotland. After defeating the English, Wallace meets his beloved again at the beginning of Book VI, in which the European tradition probably mediated by the Chaucerian one is evident:[115]

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[114] A paradigmatic illustration of this tension between love and duty is the *Aeneid*. In Book IV, Aeneas must choose between his love for Dido and his duty.

[115] "Although Harry is not usually classed as a Chaucerian, there can be no doubt that he shared, directly or indirectly, in the Chaucerian influence. It is significant, not merely that for the bulk of the poem he chose the heroic couplet, [...] but that in two instances in which he varied his metre he made choice of Chaucerian staves, introducing in Book II. 170-354 a nine-line stanza aab, aab, abb [...] identical with that of Chaucer's *Compleynte of Faire Anelida upon False Arcyte* and with Dunbar's *Goldyn Targe*, and at the

In Aperill, quhen cleithit is but weyne
The abill ground be wyrking off natur,
And woddis has won thar worthy weid off greyne;
Quhen Nympheus, in beldyn off his bour
Wyth oyle and balm fullfillit off suet odour,
Faunis maceris, as thai war wount to gang,
Walkyn thar cours in euiry casuall hour
To glaid the huntar with thar merye sang —

(VI. 9-16)

Although this cannot be categorically claimed, some references may point to the Chaucerian influence: the allusion to "Aperill" can be easily connected to the opening lines of the *Canterbury Tales*: "Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote, / the droughte of March hath perced to the roote" (ll. 1-2).[116] Although these lines are very conventional and it can be rather adventurous to suggest a source, the *topos* of the renewal of nature in a pseudo-classical setting suggests that Hary was borrowing from either Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* (ll. 291-324) or from Machaut or Froissart directly.[117] In these moments

beginning of Book VI. the ballat royal or French octave of three rhymes — ab, ab, bc, bc — in its five accented form" (Henderson 1910: 64-65). Goldstein also suggests that "the poem's experiments with aureate diction as well as its eclecticism of form may be directly or indirectly indebted to a poem like *The Temple of Glass*" (Goldstein 1993: 258). Finally, McKim in the latest edition of *The Wallace* alludes to more Chaucerian echoes in Hary's work: "*The General Prologue* to *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Knight's Tale* and *The Franklin's Tale*, *Troilus and Creseyde*, and *The Legend of Good Women*." (McKim [ed] 2003: xv)

[116] Chaucer appears to be the most likely source for Hary since, in the French tradition of the fourteenth-century, authors such as Guillaume de Machaut or Froissart normally refer to May or spring in general. One of the few exception it is precisely the opening lines of Machaut's *Le Dit dou Vergier*, in which he alludes to "avril" (l. 8).

[117] The connection of the renewal of nature with love is typical of the poetry of the troubadours. Yet, during the fourteenth century, Machaut and Forissart incorporated the pseudo-classical setting to the *topos*. In Machaut's *Fonteinne Amoureuse*, for instance, the narrator-protagonist is conducted to the *locus amoenus* of the fountain, in which he can see classical figures, which give a pseudo-mythical aura to the setting:

Si me mena par la main nue
Parmi l'erbe pognant et drue

of high emotion, Hary employed the sophisticated elements of a broader European tradition. As Jack claims, this stanzaic shift to the French octave serves to emphasise this moment of *jois* of the *fins amants* in their reunion (Jack 2001: 45).

At this point, Wallace is still doubtful and upset:

> "Qwhat is this luff? It is bot gret mischance,
> That me wald bring fra armes wtterly.
> I will nocht los my worschip for pleasance.
> I wer I think my tyme till occupy.
> ȝeit hyr to luff I will nocht lat forthy.
>
> (VI. 33-37)

Wallace's dilemma is presented in chivalric terms: his own personal preferences and human necessities clash with his knightly worth. Yet, in the particular case of Wallace, *proeza* is not at the service of his individual *pretz* but at that of the liberation of his nation. By implication, his sufferings and those of Scotland are equated once more. He cannot enjoy the "plesance" of love until his country is freed. Finally, however, he makes the only possible decision: "He thinkis als luff did him hye awance, / So ewynly held be fauour the ballance," (VI. 52-53). The *makar* reverts to a typical romance motif in which the knight needs to find the balance between *fin'amors* and chivalric deeds of arms. Should he accomplish this, love will help him to fight better and his lady will love him even more thanks to his knightly dexterity and *fame*. Yet, the employment of "the

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Sus une trop bele fonteinne
Qui chëoit, douce, clere et seinne,
En vaissel de marbre bis.
[...]
Sus le marbre de la fonteinne
Venus, Paris et dame Heleinne
Estoient [...]
(ll. 1299-303 / 1313-15)

eight line stanza, employed by Chaucer's Monk for his own tragic discourses [...] appropriately anticipates the misery to come" (Jack 2001: 45). As a tragic hero, marriage and *jois* of the Scottish leader cannot last long. He cannot escape his *fatum*: death itself destroys Wallace's matrimony. The English kill his wife: the tragic hero will not find peace until his entrance in heaven as a martyr. Further personal revenge is required. Not only does Wallace avenge himself, but he also expels the English from Lanark. The courtly discourse intermingles with and depends upon the national one once again. Hary represents the tragedy of the lover as a useful means for the liberation of the country. Even the most overtly courtly scenes are integrated within the national literary project.

As for the hero's display of *cortesia*, the best example is his conversation with the Queen of England when she is sent as an ambassador to negotiate peace with Wallace. The Queen herself is the one who suggests going to seek a truce with the Scottish leader. Her love for Wallace seems to be her main motivation: "Sum off thaim said the queyn luffyt Wallace" (VIII.1137). The meeting takes place in St Albans. Again, the bloodthirsty characterisation of Wallace at war is redefined in the context of courtly behaviour:

> In armys sone he caucht this queyn with croun
> And kyssyt hyr with-outyn wordis mor.
> Sa dyd he neuir to na Sotheron befor.
> "Madem," he said, "rycht welcum mot ȝe be.
> How plesis ȝow our ostyng for to se?"
>
> (VIII. 1234-38)

Even the body language of this scene presents a very different Wallace from the one who hates the English. His embracing and kissing her denote a total turn from the vocabulary

and action of war to the exquisiteness of the life at court. This shows Wallace as a man highly versed in the art of *cortesia*. His welcoming also deploys the words expected from a refined conversation among the upper classes. These polite manners, however, do not make him forget his main enterprise. He conflates the language of *cortesia* and that of war when the Queen demands peace alluding to Wallace's Christianity:

> "Quhen 3our fals king had Scotland gryppyt haill,
> For nakyn thing that he befor him fand
> He wald nocht thoill the rycht blud in our land,
> Bot reft thar rent, syne put thaim selff to ded."
>
> (VIII. 1296-99)

With his wife, with the English Queen and even in courtly interchanges with ladies Wallace understands what his priorities and those of his nation are. Even when the Queen confesses her love, the hero's reply still captures all the sophistication of courtly language with the metaphor of a bird being trapped by a lure:

> "Syn plesand wordis off 3ou and ladyis fair,
> As quha suld dryff the byrdis till a swar
> With the small pype, for it most fresche will call.
> Madem, as 3it 3e ma nocht tempt ws all."
>
> (VIII. 1421-24)

The metaphor of the "byrdis" reinforces the rejection; but, at the same time, it softens the effect and crudeness of a more direct "no;" it also expresses his absolute commitment to the Scottish cause through the firm refusal of any material or sentimental English offer. This command of rhetoric projects Wallace's image as an educated man, who possesses not only knightly attributes, but also the courtly virtues. Both of them elevate him to the

category of the perfect romance hero.

As Robert I in Barbour's *Bruce*, Wallace's *proeza* is also weighed against its relevance to the national cause. As mentioned in the first chapter, the prime motivation for fighting is personal revenge:

> Than Wallace said, "Her was my fadir slayne,
> My brothir als, quhilk dois me mekill payne;
> So sall my selff, or wengit be but dreid.
> The traytour is her, causer was off that deid."
> Than hecht thai all to bide with hartlye will.
> Be that the power was takand Lowdoun hill.
>
> (III. 111-16)

The original personal vendetta of the hero, which evolves into and is integrated within the liberation of Scotland, is an essential feature of Hary's discourse, whose importance is highlighted in being spoken through the main character's mouth. Such bloodthirsty vengeance, however, is accompanied by the language of chivalry. In the battle of "Lowdoun Hill", for instance, both ideas intermingle to characterise the linguistic style of the confrontation:

> The knycht Fenweik that cruell was and keyne,
> He had at dede off Wallace fadyr beyne
> And his brodyr that douchty was and der.
> Quhen Wallace saw that fals knycht was so ner
> His corage grew in Ire as a lyoune.
>
> (III. 169-73)

The deep-rooted desire for revenge enhances the knight's virtues as a warrior. His

"corage" benefits from such a situation, which will allow him not only to perform more chivalric feats, but also to avenge himself of the crimes committed towards his family. Interestingly, his being governed by "Ire" is seen a positive way of action.[118]

Although both Bruce and Wallace intermingle their personal enterprise with the country's interests, the narrative fabric of the two historical romances involves a very different development of this common feature. While Bruce's revenge is a first step in his career in the leadership of the country, that of Wallace is the *leitmotif* of the whole story. In religious terms, Bruce's is framed within a sinful act which will stay with the hero until his final expiatory crusade after death, whereas Wallace's is directly supported by the Virgin Mary, a fact which elevates his vengeance to the realm of the sacred.[119] In this milieu, the bloodthirsty story line of *The Wallace* evokes a tension between the ethical validity of such a cruel revenge and the pseudo-divine *avanture* of the hero. This thematic opposition is negotiated through the formulation of the allegorical interpretative methods applied to late medieval literature. On the basis that a text can have different allegorical perspectives, the evaluative hierarchy places the anagogical/divine level on a superior level to the tropological/ethical. Thus, the cruelty of the vendetta, unethical though it might be, appears as the means through which a more sacred aim can be attained. The bloodshed is justified in anagogical terms.

It is noteworthy that in a historicised work such as *The Wallace* in which the leader of the national cause is not a member of the high nobility but a knight, the Third Estate's role is not so important and elaborate as in *The Bruce*. Hary seems to articulate his discourse in more conventional terms as far as the lower classes are concerned. His most

[118] Traditionally, wrath, as one of the Seven Deadly Sins, would not be the ideal state of mind of a Christian knight. It would also denote lack of *mesura*. In *The Wallace*, all faults and excessive violence of which the hero might be responsible are justified in so far as his fight is allegorically seconded by God himself.
[119] These two points will be thoroughly discussed in the fourth chapter.

subversive character is the hero himself: a knight who acts as if he were the sovereign of Scotland. The commoners, though present as supporters of the main hero, do not take an active part in heroic action as individual figures:

> A hundreth dede in field was lewyt thar,
> And iii ȝemen that Wallace menyde fer mar;
> Twa was of Kyle, and the one of Conyngayme
> With Robert Boide, to Wallace com fra hayme.
>
> (III. 205-08)

While the yeomen are placed alongside the main hero and his best companions, as Goldstein remarks, Hary does not attach a lot of importance to the members of the Third Estate who supported Wallace. The romance mainly concentrates on the queens, kings, the nobility and the clergy, following the conventions of the genre (Goldstein 1993: 236). The presence of commoners has a patent purpose. As a people's hero, Wallace must be backed by the Third Estate. In this way, Hary offers an image of Wallace supported by those whose commitment to the national emancipation of Scotland is not mediated by the political and economic concerns of the nobility. If in some instances of *The Bruce*, they are named as individuals and perform valiant feats, in *The Wallace* Hary sticks to tradition as far as the commoners are integrated in the national fight within the hierarchical late medieval order. They participate in the struggle but under the commands of the upper classes, who are those permitted to perform chivalric deeds of arms.

Wallace, then, is represented as a very strong and powerful knight in the battlefield with a single-minded objective: the liberation of Scotland. This portrayal accords with (and is probably much indebted to) that of Robert Bruce in *The Bruce* in which any

personal aspiration is subservient to the national cause. Nevertheless, the courtly elements either directly borrowed for the French tradition or mediated by Chaucer are more prominent than in Barbour's text. The courtly scenes in *The Wallace*, though also scarce, are more fully developed than in its predecessor: the Scottish knight behaves as a very *courtois* person in his interactions with ladies. By way of contrast, as opposed to *The Bruce*, Wallace's knighthood is much bloodier and crueller than that of the King of Scots. Stylistically, Hary's influences, especially that of Chaucer, result in a quite distinctive work of art. Therefore, despite its particular traits along the lines of the Scottish poetry of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, the literary composition of *The Wallace* reveals the prevalence and evolution of the same Scottish tradition as codified by Barbour in *The Bruce*.

CHAPTER 3

INTERPRETATIONS OF KNIGHTHOOD AND CHIVALRY IN THE SCOTTISH CHIVALRIC ROMANCES

Introduction

While the historical romances deal with autochthonous material, the chivalric texts come from the French literary tradition. *Golagros and Gawane, Lancelot of the Laik* and *Clariodus* are based on French originals; whereas, *The Taill of Rauf Coilyear*, although it is not based upon a French source, belongs to the Matter of France.

The reader may expect that the existence of originals entailed a series of constraints in the elaboration of these works, from which *The Bruce* and *The Wallace* were free. At the same time, their being contemporary to Hary's composition implies the existence of a much richer cultural milieu than in Barbour's times. The convergence of all these precepts together with the prevalence of the elements present in Barbour's *Bruce* will unveil the degree of homogeneity in the representation of chivalry and knighthood in late medieval Scottish romances.

In the two Arthurian works, the existence of a French source will facilitate the study and understanding of the way in which Scottish *makars* either follow tradition or manipulate and adapt it to their own purposes. Hence, classic chivalric French texts such as those by Chrétien de Troyes, and the originals, the *First Continuation of Perceval* and *Lancelot do Lac*, will be employed to contextualise the Scottish tradition in a broader field. The influence — and sometimes rejection — of French themes and forms will be highlighted. Finally, analysis of the idiosyncratic *Clariodus* will raise questions about the way in which the literary components of this work correspond to those typical of the

other Scottish romances or whether the author of *Clariodus* was trying to follow the tradition of the greatest *makars* of the time.

***Rauf Coilyear*: From Humorous *Cortesia* to Serious Spirituality**

The Taill of Rauf Coilyear, composed around 1470, stands as the only surviving medieval Scottish romance dealing with the Matter of France.[120] Although the main concern of the Charlemagne Romances is the fight against the heathen, the Scottish text treats this issue only in its final stanzas. The core of the poem concentrates on the discrepancies between the *cortesia* of Charlemagne and his knights and the blunt honesty of the collier. The humorous outcome of this contrast and its implications beyond laughter will be analysed. The way in which the *makar* merges Rauf's inherent nobility and his aggressiveness will also be discussed. Finally, the change of tone from humour to seriousness in the last section of the poem will be examined in relation to its religious significance.

The beginning of the romance establishes a comic tone in which the theme of giving shelter is central to the development of the plot. This serves to confront two visions of *cortesia*. Rauf's understanding of this concept stems from his own experience based upon a series of values typical of his social stratum. This stands out against the set of determined conventions which codifies courtly behaviour:

> The coilyear, gudlie in feir, tuke him [Charlemagne] be the hand
> And put him befoir him, as ressoun had bene.
> Quhen thay come to the dure the king begouth to stand,
> To put the coilyear in befoir maid him to mene.

[120] See the introduction to *The Bruce* in the previous chapter, in which the existence of a now lost Charlemagne Romance is suggested.

He [Rauf] said, "Thow art uncourtes, that sall I warrand!"
He tyt the king by the neck, twa part in tene.
"Gif thow at bidding suld be boun or obeysand,
And gif thow of courtasie couth, thow hes foryet it clene.
Now is anis!" said the coilyear. "Kynd aucht to creip!
Sen ellis thow art unknawin
To mak me lord of my awin!
Sa mot I thrive, I am thrawin,
Begin we to threip!

(st. 10)

This long stanza summarises the main concerns of the first part of the romance. Rauf imposes his own conceptualisation of *cortesia*. His words reveal his ignorance of courtly standards. He does not allow for the existence of any other sort of civil conduct, but only the one he knows. In his perception of the world as a member of the Third Estate, the collier cannot imagine or comprehend the otherness of the chivalric world. The *hero* of the romance alienates and is alien to the customary codes of the genre: the courtly textual conventions are displaced and substituted by Rauf's matter-of-fact realism. Subversion of the norm produces a humorous outcome.

The fact that Charlemagne is his guest entitles Rauf to apply his own rules, which, he believes, no-one should question. As an outsider, the King seems to accept the host's authority, even his violent rusticity.[121] For instance, in stanza 12, he hits the king for his lack of *cortesia* once more. When Charlemagne invites him to his court, Rauf's answer is enlightening:

[121] Shepherd suggests that these instances state that Charlemagne "is more self-conscious of his own fallibility" (Shepherd 1991: 290). This "fallibility" reveals the same approach to good kingship as in the historical and Arthurian romances, which places *Rauf Coilyear* in the same literary tradition.

He said, "I have na knawledge quhair the court lyis,

And I am wonder wa to cum quhair I am unkend."

(St. 20)

This ignorance is not only of the geographical location of Charlemagne's court, but also implies his unfamiliarity with the norms of the knightly society from which the Frankish Emperor comes.

This anger and personal display of manners creates another conflict in his first meeting with Roland. There is a patent impossibility of mutual understanding. They both speak the same language, but they do not share the same conception of the world. Communication is hardly possible. Shepherd's interpretation of these lines as social critique stems from the idea that "beneath the immediate comic patina lies a shrewd observation of the demise of courtesy attending social prejudice" (Shepherd 1991: 286):

"In faith," said the coilyear, "yit was I never sa nyse!

Schir Knicht, it is na courtasie communis to scorne.

Thair is mony better than I cummis oft to Parys

That the king wait not of, nouther nicht nor morne.

For to towsill me or tit me, thocht foull be my clais,

Or I be dantit on sic wyse, my lyfe salbe lorne!"

"Do way," said Schir Rolland, "me think thow art not wise!

I rid thow at bidding be, be all that we have sworne,

And call thow it na scorning, bot do as I the ken,"

(st. 34)

Although Shepherd argues that the impossibility of understanding between the two men points to social critique, this instance shows that the "demise" is reciprocal. Rauf never

intends to submit to the knight, but endeavours to impose his own criteria once again. Rauf is as aggressive as (or even more than) Roland in his language. When Roland just wants to escort him to Paris, Rauf takes that as an offence and accuses the knight of lacking *cortesia*. Not even when Rauf admires the rich attire of the knight and evaluates the latter's worth as a warrior (st. 36-37), does he desist from defying Roland if he tries to interfere with his journey: "Thow and I sall dyntis deill quhill ane of us be deid, / For the deidis thow hes me done upon this deir day!" (st. 40).

Once in Charlemagne's court, there is a sudden change: the collier who has been a self-conscious character at his house and in his verbal confrontation with Roland feels intimidated by this new world. The discovery of the true identity of the Frankish emperor enhances his fears even more:

> "In faith, he [Charlemagne] is of mair stait than ever he me [Rauf] tald.
> Allace, that I was hydder wylit,
> I dreid me sair I be begylit."
> The king previlie smylit
> Quhen he saw that bald.
>
> (st. 55)

While in the collier's dwelling the margins of courtly society were transformed into the centre, in Paris the court recovers its centrality and Rauf's homeland becomes the periphery. His rusticity and rude manners are no longer valid; any possibility of having a subversive discourse disappears. This scenario serves to outline the evolution from the comic narrative to the knightly ambience and ultimate Christian message. This shift characterises the second part of the romance.

In fact, the most remarkable aspect of Rauf's characterisation is not his personal sense

of *cortesia* or his aggressiveness against Charlemage and Roland, but his natural nobility and *gentilesse*. As Chaucer tells us:

> Vyce may wel be heir to old richesse,
> But ther may no man, as men may wel see,
> Bequethe his heir his vertuous noblesse
> (That is appropred unto no degree
> But to the firste fader in magestee,
> That maketh hem his heyres that him queme),
> Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.
>
> (*Gentilesse,* ll. 15-21)

Rauf possesses this nobility of the soul to which Chaucer refers, whose origin is divine and not aristocratic. Such a spiritual attribute predisposes him to give shelter to Charlemagne.[122] This is a basic feature of the story, which typifies the collier's representation as a good Christian. As Jack and Rozendaal assert, "to provide lodging for others was the principal test for corporal mercy defined by Christ on the mount of olives. See Matthew 25. 31-46" (Jack and Rozendaal [ed] 1997: 58 [note]).[123] Despite his rudeness, then, Rauf offers his house to Charlemagne quite willingly:

> "I wait na worthie harberie heir neir hand
> For to serve sic ane man as me think the —
> Nane bot mine awin hous, maist in the land,
> Fer furth in the forest, amang the fellis hie.

[122] Although this is also an essential motif of romance, Rauf is a member of the Third Estate and not the typical *varvassor* or burgess. His humble origin accentuates his charity.

[123] Shepherd has also highlighted the importance of the notion of giving shelter through a biblical reference: "humble Christian ethic finds sincere expression in Rauf's words: as Hebrews 13.2 tells us, "do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (in this instance, for "angels", read nobility)." (Shepherd 1991: 287)

With-thy thow wald be payit of sic as thow fand,
Forsuith, thow suld be welcum to pas hame with me,
Or ony uther gude fallow that I heir fand,"

(st. 6)

Rauf's attitude to offer his humble home not only to Charlemagne but to whoever may need help projects an image of the collier as an exemplary Christian (or at least a man of natural *cortesia* and *largeza*). This will be a key aspect of the narrative in its later development. Rauf will not have to wait for the other life for his charity to be rewarded. Although it has little to do with a spiritual gift, Charlemagne's gratitude will be materialised in financial and social improvement for the collier: "Befoir mony worthie he dubbit him knicht." The Frankish Emperor also tells Rauf that "Ilk yeir thre hundredth pund assigne the I sall" (st. 59).

Then, although Shepherd claims that "Rauf could be said to be a serious spokesman for serious issues — issues especially serious to the enterprising stratum of society he might be intended to represent" (Shepherd 1991: 287), Rauf's conduct after being knighted seems to contradict Shepherd's affirmation. By virtue of becoming a knight, the former collier's demeanour is non-naturalistically dignified:

"For to hald that I have hecht I hope it be the best,
To yone busteous beirne that boistit me to byde.
Amang thir galyart gromis I am bot ane gest,
I will the ganandest gait to that gay glyde.
Sall never lord lauch on loft quhill my lyfe may lest
That I for liddernes suld leif, and levand besyde."

(st. 61)

Suddenly the rustic commoner who knew nothing about the chivalric world behaves and speaks as a knight. No learning process is required. The *makar* uses this artifice to conform to the *decorum* that a nobleman should show through his conduct. Rauf's language and words reveal the internalisation of his new role in society through such a dramatic, but knightly, assertion that death is better than living in dishonour. More importantly, he realises his position as an outsider and will do his best to integrate. Social critique, then, does not work any longer in the last section of the romance.

The text will now be redefined in the context of the typical Charlemagne romances: the fight against the heathen. Although the comic tone predominates during the major part of the narrative, offering a transgressive approach to chivalric values (Jack and Rozendaal [ed] 1997: 58), the passage in which a Muslim emir is converted regains the seriousness that such a momentous scene requires. Rauf fights the emir according to the knightly norm: first on horseback (st. 63), and then on foot with his sword (st. 64). He is not and does not behave as a member of the Third Estate any longer. His way of action and language are the same as those of Charlemagne's knights. Nevertheless, it is not until Roland's intervention that the Saracen is convinced to convert to Christianity:

> "Na", said Schir Rolland, "that war na resoun.
> I trow in the mekle God, that maist of michtis may.
> The tane is in power to mak the presoun;
> For that war na vassalage, sum men wald say,
> I rid that thow hartfully forsaik thy Mahoun.
> Fy on that foull fiend, for fals is thy fay;
> Becum Cristin, schir knicht, and on Christ call!"
>
> (st. 69)

Although Rauf is already a knight, the *makar* significantly reverts to the most famous of the twelve peers and his command of rhetoric to persuade the enemy. This device serves to highlight the religious significance of such a moment both in the romance and at a spiritual level.

In conclusion, the romance is divided into two thematically and tonally distinctive parts. The first one contrasts the natural *cortesia* of Rauf with the mannerist *cortesia* of the upper classes in a humorous manner. Charlemagne accepts the authority of Rauf on the basis of being the latter's guest. Once in the Frankish Emperor's court, however, it is the collier who feels displaced and finally submits to courtly manners and behaviour. In the second part, the *makar* deals with the central theme of the Matter of France, the struggle against the infidel. All the humour of the previous sections is substituted by the seriousness of the Muslim emir's conversion. Lastly, it is also noteworthy that the display of *cortesia* and nobility is not recreated in a detailed manner as was customary in the French romances. Thematically, then, the *makar* belongs to the established Scottish tradition where the depiction of social pomp is reduced to the minimum.

Lancelot of the Laik and *Lancelot do Lac*: Lancelot Reinvented, *Fin'amors* Displaced

Although in the historical romances the idiosyncratic representation of knighthood, chivalry and *cortesia* might be attributed to their national and nationalistic subject matter, in the chivalric romances the *makars* develop similar conceptions of these ideas. This appears to be a consequence of the specific evolution of the genre in Scotland. A comparative study of these notions in *Lancelot of the Laik* and the Old French *Prose Lancelot* will help us to trace the Scottish tradition through Barbour up to the end of the Middle Ages. The study of the original will elucidate the manner in which some of the

most important elements in the description of Lancelot and *fin'amors* are not even present in the Scottish text. The adaptation of the French *Prose Lancelot* to Scottish standards, then, results in a series of distinctive features which often alter and displace the meaning and focus of the narrative. First, the status of Lancelot as an outsider will be analysed. Next, the differing depiction of the love and arms *topos* in both romances will be discussed.

In the *Prose Lancelot,* the author envisages the hero's condition as outsider much more emphatically than does either Chrétien de Troyes in his *Chevalier de la Charrette* or the author of *Lancelot of the Laik.* The prose text forces the knight into the world of the feminine from the very beginning to the very end through the rejection of father figures and his education in the magical (and feminine) world of the Lady of the Lake and her fairies. Although it is true that the *rejection* of Ban, his real father, is not intentional, the reasons which cause his death might be understood as the first instance leading Lancelot to a more conscientious future rejection of male figures. After the senechal's treason, the world of Lancelot's father is destroyed:

> Li rois Bans voit son chastel ardoir qu'il amoit plus que nul chastel qu'il eüst,
>
> car par ce seul chastel estoit s'esperance de recovrer tote sa terre. (p. 13)

The aggressive masculine world of warriors and knights deprives Ban and, implicitly, Lancelot, of their "terre." The ultimate loss of "esperance" is an unequivocal sign of Ban's renunciation of life. The accident from which he dies is just anecdotal. The real cause of his death is the loss of his realm. The king without a kingdom prefers to perish. Therefore, Lancelot's first rejection of the father (and the masculine) is doubly significant.[124] In the Scottish *Lancelot*, the reference to Ban is completely different in

[124] As Calin points out, "From birth, the hero of love is associated with women and men are prominent by their absence" (Calin 1994: 146). The masculine knightly world of war kills Ban and forces Lancelot, still a baby, into the feminine world. The hero's fate seems to be inclined to the feminine at the same time as

context and intention. He is just mentioned as Lancelot's father:

> Quharfor thareone I wil me not depend
>
> How he was borne, nore how his fader deid
>
> And ek his moder, [...]
>
> (ll. 214-16)

This allusion *en passant* does not help the creation of Lancelot's image as an outsider. This can only be guessed on the basis of the reader/listener's knowledge of the French original.[125] Even his mother's life is ignored: there is no reference to her becoming a nun. She seems to have died at the same time as her husband. This shows the *makar's* methodical *reductio* of the scenes which are not primordial to his literary and ideological tenets.

In *Lancelot do Lac*, again, when Lancelot is taken by a damsel to the lake (p. 15),[126] the image of Lancelot as a stranger to Arthur's chivalric rules begins taking shape. If the father figure is excluded, the mother figure is displaced: the real mother of the world of reality is replaced by the Lady of the Lake and the world of magic. "Comme les fées des légendes irlandaises, la Dame du Lac emporte Lancelot dans l'autre monde pour le soustraire au danger qui le menace" (Harf 1984: 26). The hero is dissociated from both the knightly realm of the father and the presence of the mother to be transported to the kingdom of the *unreal* and magic. Crucially,

> [w]hat distinguishes the land lying beneath the appearance of a lake from

father figures will be confronted and repudiated.

[125] Although Lancelot's story was probably known by everybody in the audience, the familiarity with the original might not have been so homogeneous. Those who were familiar with the *Prose Lancelot* would have an intertextual reference of the hero as an outsider bereft of patriarchal links, whereas the rest of the listeners would have *read* the story in a different manner.

[126] Harf claims that this sudden familial change can also be interpreted as a second birth: "la chute dans l'eau de l'enfant et de la femme étroitement embrassés est une image de naissance, la seconde naissance de Lancelot." (Harf 1984: 27)

> other lands in the *PL* is not anything strange about the land itself or its inhabitants, but the fact that its lies outside the network of feudal relationships and is free from conflict between rival lords. (Kennedy 1986: 117)

This will explain Lancelot's inability to conform to the feudal laws in Arthur's court. Its isolation and links with white magic also confer a mythical character on this mysterious place. These mythical and non-feudal traits transform the Lake into another womb in which Lancelot's early education will take place. As Kennedy affirms, the strong connection to the Lake will continue throughout the protagonist's life (Kennedy 1986: 111). Notwithstanding the Lady of the Lake's willingness to introduce Lancelot to the art of knighthood with the hiring of a master, Lancelot rejects this other father figure because he does not understand the hero's disinterested sense of *largeza* (pp. 45-46). The tension between magic/feminine/otherness and knighthood/masculine/centre will be a recurrent feature in the romance.

The influence of the Lady of the Lake is underplayed in the Scottish text. The *makar* insists on not relating how Lancelot "[...] was tak / And nwrist with the Lady of the Lak" (ll. 219-20). The Scottish author/translator seems to rely on the listener's intertextual knowledge once more. As a matter of fact, the only textual evidence of his position as an outsider at Arthur's court is in his name's allusion to the "Laik." Moreover, there is no reference to the hero's tutor, who is completely ignored.

At this juncture in the French work, Lancelot returns to the maternal womb. He retreats from the masculine knighthood to the Lady of the Lake again. She decides that she will be his instructor in the art of chivalry, which presupposes a particular understanding of the matter. Consequently, as pointed out by Kennedy, the Lady of the

Lake gives her own interpretation of chivalry (pp. 142-46) in which:

> While stressing the knight's role as a champion of justice and defender of the weak and defenceless, [she] does not mention the relationship between the knight and his lord. (Kennedy 1986: 119)

Interestingly, then, one of the basic pillars of the feudal society is obviated, anticipating Lancelot's *treason* towards Arthur. The former's role as an alien to Arthur's world is consistently represented.[127]

The last rejection of a father figure is that of Arthur, which is intimately related to the main love interest of the work. Because Arthur is Lancelot's lord, this betrayal is particularly difficult to handle for the author. A series of narrative strategies is deployed to create a very sophisticated plot with situations and characters absent from Chrétien's *Chevalier de la Charrette*. Lancelot becomes Guenevere's knight rather than the King's both as a *fin amant* and according to the rules of knighthood. Hence, the sword used to dub Lancelot as a knight is not that of Arthur but Guenevere's:

> "Or les menez, fait li vallez [Lancelot], a la cort monseignor lo roi Artu, si dites a madame la reine que li vallez qui va por lo secors a la dame de Nohaut les li envoie. Et li dites que ge li ment que, por moi gaaigner a tozjorz, que ele me face chevalier, si m'envoit une espee com a celui qui ses chevaliers sera." (p. 174)

It is Lancelot's initiative to become the Queen's and not the King's knight. Lancelot's attitude can be interpreted at different allegorical levels. At a political and ethical level, the feudal relationship between lord and vassal will be doubly accomplished in purely

[127] The Lady of the Lake also exhorts the defence of the Church as a knight's main duty. This *locus communis* in medieval manuals of chivalry is given special importance in this context owing to the origin of the Lady of the Lake herself. As a fairy, she would be associated to the pagan world and detached from Christian orthodoxy. Yet, thanks to this affirmation, she integrates in the Christian faith at the same time as confirms his attachment to goodness and white magic.

contractual terms: he owes vassalage only to his *lord*. In the world of *fin'amors*, the lord/vassal relationship of *fins amants* is axiomatic — the lady plays the role of the feudal lord, whereas the knight is the vassal of both the lady and *Amor*. At the allegorical level, however, Lancelot is not only rejecting Arthur as a father, but trying to realise "an oedipal wish-fulfilment fantasy" (Calin 1994: 147), in which he will replace the father figure. It is not only a fantasy of sexual consummation disguised with the idealisation of *fin'amors*, but a dream of power and possession: the landless knight aims to replace the rich king.[128] Lancelot, without knowing, is symbolically claiming what was snatched from him. Arthur's indifference to Ban's request for help deprived Lancelot of land and mother. At another level of interpretation, this rejection of Arthur develops the image of Lancelot as an outsider further. Once again, he disrupts masculine knighthood in favour of his own interpretation of it: his master and initiator in the art of chivalry was the Lady of the Lake, his only *Lord*[129] is going to be Guenevere. Lancelot challenges the knights' world and replaces it with the feminine.

In *Lancelot of the Laik*, the more schematic adaptation of the relationships between Lancelot and Arthur and between Lancelot and Guenevere does not highlight the betrayal so thoroughly. In fact, there is not any scene in which Lancelot appears with either the king or the queen. The hero's treason to Arthur can be assumed only in that Lancelot loves the Queen. But the absence of direct interactions between these characters forces the audience to fill the gaps.

If *Lancelot of the Laik* had followed its source closely, it would have concentrated on the hero-lover's progression both as the best knight and as a *fin amant*. The Prologue

[128] As Scott defines it, "it [*fin'amors*] is a huge elaborate dream of eternal youth in pursuit of the unattainable, a materialist parody of religious life, and at the bottom is the longing of landless adolescent squires and suchlike to possess the power and castles of their overlords." (Scott 1966: 29)

[129] It is worth noting that the troubadours' term to refer to the beloved lady, *midons*, originally meant "my lord."

contains a full range of conventional courtly elements and apparently anticipates the centrality of the love plot. Spearing comments on the influence of the *Prologue* to *The Legend of Good Women* on this opening.[130] The beginning recreates the typical atmosphere of medieval love poetry:

> The soft morow ande the lustee Aperill,
> The wynter set, the stormys in exill,
> Quhen that the brycht and fresch illumynare
> Uprisith arly in his fyré chare
> His hot courss into the orient,
> And frome his spere his goldine stremis sent
> Wpone the grond, in maner off mesag
> One every thing, to ualkyne thar curage,
> That natur haith set wnder hire mycht,
> Boith gyrss and flour and every lusty uicht,
> And namly thame that felith the assay
> Of lufe, to schew the kandelis of May,
> Throw birdis songe with opine vox one hy
> That sessit not one lufaris for to cry,
> Lest thai forghet, throw slewth of ignorans,
> The old wsage of Lovis observans.
>
> (ll. 1-16)

The conventional spring setting with the renewal of nature provides the perfect scenario

[130] Spearing also refers to the influence exerted by the *Prologue* to *the Legend of Good Women* "on the [other] Scottish dream-poems of the later fifteenth century." In the concrete instance of *Lancelot of the Laik*, Spearing adumbrates that the dreamer's characterisation, in a state of "sleep or religious ecstasy," follows that of Chaucer's dreamer in *The Legend*. (Spearing 1976: 187)

for a presentation and debate on love. The author ingeniously links the regenerative force of nature with "every lusty uicht," who is prone to love. This image is completed by the singing birds, which are central figures in the lyrics of the late Middle Ages. Not only do they stand as messengers of *Amor* but their singing symbolically brings harmony to the poem: "espace multidimensionnel et clos, *hortus conclusus* du chant, c'est-à-dire du langage spécifié par l'harmonie dite *amour*, d'ont l'oiseau et la fleur sont l'emblème" (Zumthor 1972 : 243).[131] The long introduction to the poem also lays stress on what was supposed to be its main theme: the dichotomy between the pleasures and the sufferings of love (l. 14). This will be enunciated in accordance with the conventions of the time: "the old wsage of Lovis observans" (l.16).

This is followed by the narrator's exposition of his sorrowful love until the intervention of a bird, here as an agent of love as personified by the "King of Love" (l. 93), reprimands him for his passive and querulous attitude:

> "Ful," quod the bird, "lat be thi nyss dispare,
> For in this erith no lady is so fare,
> So hie estat, nore of so gret empriss
> That in hireself haith uisdome ore gentrice,
> Yf that o wicht, that worthy is to be
> Of Lovis court schew til hir that he
> Servith hire in lovis hartly wyss
> That schall tharfor hyme hating or dispiss.
> The god of Love thus chargit the, at schort,

[131] For a detailed discussion on the relationship between the love lyric and singing/song, see Zumthor's *Essai de poétique medieval*, chapter five "Le grand chant courtois."

That to thi lady yhoue thi wo report."

(ll. 127-36)

The language of the bird situates the poem within courtly lyric tradition. The attributes bestowed on the lady and her failure to understand the narrator's feelings derive from the late medieval *lai* tradition of Machaut and Froissart, probably mediated by Chaucer.[132] Her demeanour must be dictated by *taciturnitas*, which implies not only the minimum and precise use of speech but also the occultation of her real feelings. All these features transformed the lady into an object of mystery and adoration. Nevertheless, it also provokes the customary (in so far as it was also a literary figure) desperation of the lover, who is suffering from such a situation.

As expressed in the poetry of the troubadours, the lover is at the earliest stage of the way to *fin'amors*; he is still too timid to show his feelings to his *domna*. His state could be catalogued as that of the *fenhedor*. This is precisely how the poetic "I" feels at this stage. Hence, the bird's intervention is crucial in encouraging him to express his love in an artful manner:

"Sum trety schall yhoue for thi lady sak,

That wnkouth is, als tak one hand and mak

[132] In Machaut's *Remede de Fortune*, for instance, a similar situation takes place. Like the narrator of *Lancelot of the Laik*, the "I" persona of the *Remede* wants to let his beloved know about his love through his literary compositions:

Et tous les chans que je ditoie,
A sa loange les faisoie
En pensant que, s'il avenist
Que mes chans devant li venist,
Qu'elle porroit savoir comment
Je l'aim et sui en son comment.
Et mes cuers moult s'y deduisoit,
Quant ma dame a ce me duisoit
Qu'a sa loange et a s'onnour
Me faisoit chanter pour s'amour.
(ll. 413-22)

Of love ore armys or sum othir thing

That may hir oneto thi remembryng brynge,"

(ll. 145-48)

Apparently, this passage highlights the narrative focus of the romance: the tension between "love" and "armys." The subject matter and the parts of the French original selected would certainly support this presumption. Yet, the protagonist also seems to take on board the final words of the same line "or sum othir thing" as the thematic leitmotif of his poem. As the reader will soon begin to suspect, the *amor et militia topos* will become secondary to something else. This "sum othir thing" is Amytans' instructive lesson on good kingship to Arthur.

Despite the author's insistence on his story being based on "love and armys" (l. 200), several elements in the Prologue indicate otherwise. One of these indications, as Scheps remarks, is the fact that the lover-narrator proffers what must be the longest *occupatio* in the medieval literature of the British Isles. For eighty-four lines (215-298), he enumerates all the episodes from *Lancelot do Lac* which he is going to exclude from his narration (Scheps 1967-68: 168). Significantly, one of the episodes the author omits is:

[...] how that he was tak

By love and was iwondit to the stak

And throuch and throuch persit to the hart

That al his tyme he couth it not astart;

For thare of Love he enterit in service

Of Wanore throuch the beuté and franchis,

(ll. 225-30)

This exclusion of Lancelot falling in love and entering its service relocates the focus of

the love story: Lancelot is already a knight in love. The *fin amant's* progression from chivalric deeds to attain the Queen's heart in *Lancelot do Lac* is absent, or rather simply reduced to the war against Galiot. Although at first sight the Scottish delineation of the plot might remind the reader of Chretien's *Le Chevalier de la Charrette,* in which Lancelot's affection for Guenevere is already present in his first appearance, the context of the Scottish Lancelot is arguably different. In the Scottish text, the knight has already started his maturing and learning process. At any rate, this progression is assumed rather than described. His feelings are also established; they do not evolve. *Fin'amors* is present but static.

Furthermore, the French verse *roman* is markedly courtly with the developing love story at the core of its narrative, whilst *Lancelot of the Laik* attaches much more importance to the national/regal components. This originates a very significant shift from Lancelot's personal enterprise to Arthur's defence of his kingdom. Hence, for most of the narrative it is the British King who becomes the main character of a romance whose title is *Lancelot of the Laik.*

In Chrétien's romance, the knight's love not only evolves until consummation, but even after that, the relationship between Lancelot and Guenevere seems more solid and Lancelot much more secure in their love. This is manifest in the way in which he interacts with other women. In an early scene a lady offers shelter to Lancelot in return for his *amors* (ll. 940-45): although at first he reluctantly accedes, "li cuers li dialt" (l. 957). After the night of love with the Queen passed, he is more inclined to play with the language of *cortesia* even if he has no intention of submitting to another woman. When Maleagant's sister liberates him from prison and provides him with beautiful attire, he does not hesitate in replying:

"Amie, fet il, seulemant

A Deu et a vos rant merciz

De ce que sains sui et gariz.

Par vos sui de prison estors.

Por ce poez mon cuer, mon cors

Et mon servise et mon avoir

Quant vos pleira prandre et avoir.

(ll. 6680-86)

Both Lancelot and the lady know that these are only words of gratitude within the game of *cortesia*. While Lancelot was previously unable to dissociate the language of *fin'amors* from that of *cortesia*, as a mature knight and lover, he can be playfully courteous without being unfaithful to his beloved. This essentially courtly context, in which the love plot develops, is systematically reduced in the Scottish text. Its reliance on the *Prose Lancelot*, which emphasises military action, already envisaged a more epic milieu. Unlike in Chrétien's text, in the composition of the prose romance, Arthur's defence of his kingdom plays an important role.

In both the *Prose Lancelot* and *Lancelot of the Laik,* the fate of Arthur's kingdom is dependent upon the display of the hero's *proeza* and its interrelation with love. Yet, the disposition of the Scottish romance prevents the love component from becoming central. Even Lancelot's most amorous speeches, such as this one before fighting Galiot's army, connote an interpretation different from that of the original text:

"Bot, hart, sen at yow knaiwth she is here

That of thi lyve and of thi deith is stere,

Now is thi tyme, now help thiself at neid

And the devod of every point of dred
That cowardy be none into the senn;
Fore and yow do, yow knowis thi peyne, I weyn.
Yow art wnable ever to attane
To hir mercy or cum be ony mayne.
Tharfor Y red hir thonk at yow disserve
Or in hir presens lyk o knycht to sterf."

(ll. 1019-28)

While the *locus communis* of *amor et militia* is taken from the French *Prose Lancelot*, the contextualisation of the Scottish work allows for a different set of implications; one in which the epic discourse forces the courtly discourse into the background. Although on a rhetorical level Lancelot's reference to his "hart" connotes the subordination of the military action to love, the *makar* transforms the more markedly chivalric milieu of the French text into a new (but typically Scottish) re-interpretation. Lancelot's *proeza* and knighthood are at the service of the liberation of Arthur's realm. There are no personal knightly *avantures* which glorify the hero's worth on the battlefield, but, as in the other historical and Arthurian romances analysed, individual ambitions are integrated in a national enterprise. Within the boundaries of this romance, this will be the one and only touchstone of Lancelot's recognition as the best knight and his last step towards Guenevere's heart. The absence of previous encounters between the two *fins amants* concentrates the entire love story in this one epic adventure. As the thematic axis of romance lies in good kingship, the narrative framework which minimises the paramountcy of knighthood and courtesy and makes them subservient to Arthur's preservation of his kingdom. The result of this situation could not be more ironic

inasmuch as Arthur's victory over Galiot can occur only if Lancelot intervenes. But the successful intervention of Lancelot will mean Guenevere's subsequent surrender to his advances. Consequently, whatever the outcome of the battle may be, the monarch is going to lose either his kingdom or his wife's fidelity.

The evolution of *fin'amors* in *Lancelot do Lac* is strikingly different from that in *Lancelot of the Laik*. The examination of love in the French text will help to illuminate the singularity of its treatment in the Scottish romance better. In the French, the hero's devotion to Guenevere is obvious from the very first instant he sees her:

> Maintenant aparçoit bien la reine qu'il est esbahiz et trespansez, mais ele n'osse pas cuidier que ce soit por li; et neporquant ele lo sospece un po, si an laisse la parole ester attant. Et por ce qu'ele nel velt en greignor folie metre, ele se lieve de la place. (p. 158)

Although this scene takes place in the presence of Arthur's courtiers, none of them is able to interpret the signs, code and careful choice of the words of *fin'amors*. These people seem to be part of the masculine world of Arthur's knights. The hero's inability to speak properly is a clear sign of his falling in love. The only one who does realise is Guinevere. Her understanding of the symptoms of love functions at two different levels: symbolically, she is prepared to experience the vicissitudes of *fin'amors*; pragmatically, she proves to be worthy of Lancelot's admiration. She endeavours to divert the attention so as not to be discovered. This is another unequivocal sign that she is aware of the conventions: secrecy is vital between the two lovers owing to the illicit nature of their relationship: [133]

[133] "The poet would often express himself in a deliberately enigmatic style, either because he wished to convey a private message without improperty or fear of scandal [...], or because he wished to provide the connoisseur with the pleasure of exegesis. Words in common usage thus acquired a specialized meaning

> Since the nature of the courtly love-affair is adulterous, secrecy is of the utmost necessity. No sin that the *ami* can commit is greater than that of making the slightest mention of any favour that the *dame* ("lady") may have bestowed on him. The fear of spies and of betrayal is a constant source of anxiety in both parties. Love cannot survive discovery. (Scott 1966: 23)

In their next meeting, Lancelot manages to be more articulate. All his words are of the greatest significance for the love theme:

> "Ha! Dame, fait il [Lancelot] en sospirant, vos me pardonroiz avant la folie que ge ai faite."
>
> "Quel folie, fait ele [Guinevere], feïstes vos?"
>
> "Dame, fait il, de ce que ge m'en issi de ceianz sanz prandre congié a vos."
>
> "Biax dolz amis, fait la reine, vos iestes si juenes hom que l'an vos doit bien pardoner un tel mesfait, et gel vos pardoign mout volentiers."
>
> "Dame, fait il, vostre merci. Dame, fait il, se vos plaisoit, ge me tandroie en quel que leu que ge alasse por vostre chevalier."
>
> "Certes, fait ele, ce voil ge mout."
>
> "Dame, fait il, des or m'en irai a vostre congié."
>
> "A Deu, fait ele, biax douz amis."
>
> Et il respont entre ses danz:
>
> "Granz merciz, dame, qant il vos plaist que ge lo soie."
>
> (p. 165)

The polyvalence and ambiguity of language between Lancelot and Guenevere construct a conversation with different levels of meaning in which knighthood, *cortesia* and

within the context of the troubadour tradition." (Boase 1977: 104)

fin'amors intermingle. The author merges the concepts of *chevalier* and *ami* in the hero at the same time as the Queen's *cortesia* reveals her predisposition towards him. Although Lancelot asks to be her knight (which could be understood only in literal terms), her use of *biax dolz amiz* (twice) recalls the language of *fin'amors*, in which the lover is called *ami*. Again, Guenevere's employment of the word *jeunes* is full of courtly reminiscences going far beyond the fact that he is actually young. The Provençal term *joven* does not exclusively refers to young age, but rather to an inner quality of spontaneous generosity in love (Gaunt and Kay [ed] 1999: 293). His being *joven* is exculpatory of his self-confessed "folie." In this context, "folie" or *foudatz* (in the language of the troubadours) functions as an unmistakable allusion to a lover's process of falling in love, in which joy and sadness come together without the *amant* being able to control them.[134] As expressed in this *canso* by Marcabru (*c.* 1130- *c.* 1149):

> Amors es mout de mal avi:
> mil homes a mortz ses glavi,
> Dieus no fetz tant fort gramavi,
> - Escoutatz! -
> que tot nesci del plus savi
> non fa, si.l ten al latz.
>
> ("Dirai vos senes duptansa," ll. 37-42)

Marcabru expounds the *foudatz* of love for seventy-two lines in this poem. He composes his poem by employing a series of similes to show how deceitful the personified *Amors* is and why the *amants* behave in such an insane manner while under the influence of love.

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[134] "In the *ami* the ensuing collision between his patriarchal tradition and his courtly love breeds an emotional and moral conflict productive of symptoms resembling those of neurosis or even insanity: [...] loss of speech in her presence, accompanied by trembling, blushing, and paling alternately" (Scott 1966: 24). That is, the same state in which Lancelot is.

This demeanour on Lancelot's part is present in both romances: in *Lancelot do Lac,* "the fear associated with great love can be just as important a motive force towards great deeds as is the *grant seürté* which also stems from love" (Kennedy 1986: 54). This distressful state is repeated several times during the narrative when Lancelot is physically separated from the Queen. Following the original, in the Scottish text, the author depicts the knight's sorrow with the same conception in mind:

> This woful knyght that felith not bot peine
> So prekith hyme the smert of loves sore
> And every day encressith more and more.
> And with this lady takine is also
> And kepit whar he may nowhare go
> To haunt knychthed, the wich he most desirit.
>
> (ll. 720-25)

The knight, being so deeply absorbed by his sad love thoughts, is unable to perform any feat of arms at all. Therefore, although the symbiosis between *amor et militia* is perfectly incarnated in the figure of Lancelot, there are some instances in which the balance is lost and the *foudatz* of the *fin amant* reappears. *Foudatz* sporadically keeps him from his duties as a knight.

After many fights and battles, Lancelot must save Arthur's kingdom from Galehot/Galiot — the section on which the Scottish version focuses. The main plot of the romance is linked to Arthur's preservation of his territories both politically and militarily: the courtly dialectics will determine the outcome of the epic plot on which Arthur's victory is totally dependent. Previously Amytans had made clear that the king had to change his policy if he wanted to keep his lands. Indeed the military outcome of the

conflict seemed to be subject to Arthur's political skills as put into practice through *cortesia* and *largeza*. Ironically, however, it will be Lancelot's presence rather than Arthur's regenerated policies that will dictate the future of the realm. At this juncture, epic and courtly scenarios must conflate again. The source of Lancelot's *proeza* does not stem from his well-known dexterity as a warrior but from his love for Guenevere:

> The Blak Knycht saw the danger of the feld
> And al his doingis knowith quho beheld
> And ek remembrith into his entent
> Of the mesag that sche haith to hyme sent.
> Than curag, strenth encresing with manhed,
> Ful lyk o knycht oneto the feld he raid,
> Thinking to do his ladice love to have,
> Or than his deth befor hir to resave.
>
> (ll. 3165-72)

Lancelot's main reason for fighting has nothing to do with Arthur's cause. As in the first battle, the possibility of attaining Guenevere's love through heroic action is the moving force which feeds his desire to perform chivalric deeds of arms. After the *makar* has amplified the political components from the French original, the final resolution of the poem places Arthur in a rather vulnerable position in so far as *his* champion regards this battle only as a means to conquer his beloved's heart. In this particular context, then, the romance *topos* of *amor* and *militia*[135] functions as a bridge between the epic and the courtly discourses, making the former totally dependent on the latter.

Unfortunately, the last folios of the Scottish manuscript are lost just before one of the

[135] A good example of this is *Le Roman du Enéas*, in which Enéas, when truly in love with Lavinia, manages to channel his feelings into his *proeza* (ll. 8961-89), which helps him to fight better.

most important scenes in the romance takes place: Galehot/Galiot arranges a meeting between the Queen and Lancelot. According to the fictive narrator's long *occupatio*, we can presume that this scene was the conclusion to the Scottish romance:

> And how that Venus, siting hie abuf,
> Reuardith hyme of travell into love
> And makith hyme his ladice grace to have,
> And thankfully his service can resave:
> This is the mater quhich I think to tell.
>
> (ll. 309-13)

In the French prose romance, the first part of the conversation between Lancelot and Guenevere is about revelation, first of *proeza*, then, of *amors*. The feats of the anonymous Red and Black knights are finally attributed to Lancelot in the presence of his beloved. Now he is arguably the best knight in the world; consequently, he is in a position to request the favour of the best lady on earth. The second confession, then, will bring together these two themes:

> "Or me dites, totes les chevaleries que vos avez faites, por cui les feïstes vos?"
>
> "Dame, fait il, por vos."
>
> "Commant? fait ele, amez me vos tant?"
>
> "Dame, fait il, ge n'ain tant ne moi ne autrui."
>
> "Et des qant, fait ele, m'amez vos tant?"
>
> "Dame, fait il, des lo jor que ge sui apelez chevaliers et si ne l'estoie mie."
>
> (p. 345)

Lancelot's confession renders sublime the *locus communis* of *amor et militia*. As

Sweeter claims, "l'amour est, comme on l'a vu, une émotion ennoblissante qui pousse le héros à réaliser un destin glorieux" (Sweetser 1989: 29). Nevertheless, the knight's declaration does not culminate with Guenevere's straightforward acceptance of Lancelot's love. In what would appear to be at first a playful courtly game, she doubts Lancelot's constancy and fidelity in love. This last test causes Lancelot to faint. Galehot intervenes in his favour. Although this works against his personal interests, Galehot's attitude is crucial for the two *fins amants* to come together.[136] The Queen's kiss certifies Lancelot's acceptance in the service of love as a vassal would enter the service of a lord:

> "Biaus douz anmis, fait ele au chevalier, ge suis vostre, tant avez fait; et mout an ai grant joie." (p. 348)

This would presumably be the end to the Scottish text. In the *Prose Lancelot*, the ultimate *jois*, *lo miels*, of consummated love between lovers will occur later after another heroic deed of the greatest magnitude. Lancelot defeats the Saxons who were about to conquer Arthur's territory (p. 544). After that, the Queen and the knight consummate their passion.

The scene, which could (or even should) have been a central episode in the realisation of *fin'amors*, is hardly developed. Although the author sets the meeting of the lovers in a garden, this *locus amoenus* is not described at all. This does not accord with late medieval literary conventions.[137] Likewise consummation lacks the imaginative narrative

[136] Arguably, Galehot's feelings for Lancelot are far beyond simple friendship. He is also in love with Lancelot: "Il [Galehot] est frappé d'admiration pour ce jeune parangon de prouesse et de beauté physiques qui est, en même temps, doué d'un caractère sensible, attachant. Il aime Lancelot, le cas est clair" (Sweetser 1989: 27). Nonetheless, Galehot is not as successful as Guenevere. Owing to Lancelot, he renounces the possibility of conquering Arthur's kingdom. He finally loses everything and dies. If Guenevere's is the love of fulfilment, that of Galehot is the love of renunciation.

[137] As Spearing states, "the *locus amoenus* or 'beautiful place', which became the heavenly landscape of literary visions and dreams, is basically a Mediterranean landscape, an ideal originating in Greece, Italy, and Palestine. It is typically set in bright southern sunlight (perhaps augmented by or transformed into jewelled brilliance of the Apocalypse), but it also provides shade against the sun, and is therefore furnished with a tree or trees, often fruit-trees. The trees will be in a flowery meadow, which will provide fragrance as well as bright colours, and there will probably be birds singing in them." (Spearing 1976: 17)

of Chrétien's version of the night of love in *Le Chevalier de la Charrette*:

> Quant li dui [Lancelot and Galehot] furent desarmé, si furent mené en deus chanbres et jut chascuns avoc s'amie, que mout s'antramoient, et orent totes joies que amant puent avoir. (p. 547)

It is evident that the author did not want to place any emphasis on this scene. Even more striking is the exclusion of any courtly conversation between the lovers. The writer seems to have thought that the hero's adulterous relationship with the Queen may have worked against his image as the best Christian knight. His being driven by passion towards a married woman could be interpreted as lack of *mesura* led by sexual desire (*amor mixtus*). As a member of the Round Table, he also appears to break one of the pillars of the knightly code, the personal pledge of loyalty to Arthur and the fellowship with all the members, a reproachable act of *desfi*. For these two reasons, the author endeavours to construct a narrative which minimises the moral and social impact of both transgressions.

Although Lancelot is always characterised as the perfect knight whose feelings for Guenevere are guided by *franchise*, his sin against the holy sacrament of marriage is abated by Arthur's image as a bad husband. The author strategically places the King's meeting with the Saxon lady just before the lovers' consummation. The Saxon lady betrays him and Arthur ends up in prison (p. 546). He lacks a very important courtly/knightly virtue, that of *conoissensa*, "the power of discrimination, specially the ability of distinguishing the good from the bad, the true from false, the real from the illusory" (Topsfield 1981: 314). This will be increased even more plausibly when the king is willing to accept the false Guenevere and wants to crown her:

> "Certes, fait il, il [Arthur] est en Camelide entre lui et madame la reine [the false one], et si vos [Gawain] mande, per la foi que vos li devez qui ses hom

> liges iestes et ses niés, que vos veigniez a lui et que vos li menez toz les barons del reiaume de Logres, car il portera corone a cest Noel en la terre ma dame et tandra cort mout efforciee. Si velt que par devant toz ses barons soit ma dame enointe et sacree et reçoive l'anor de la corone de Bretaigne." (pp. 594-95)

Although under the influence of a potion, Arthur's symbolic blindness as a husband is implied in all these instances. Lancelot as a true lover deserves Guenevere's love. The other great problem of the relationship between the two *fins amants* is Lancelot's hypothetical breaking of the knightly code by betraying his lord. Yet, as mentioned earlier in this section, this is more or less satisfactorily solved by making Lancelot the Queen's and not the King's knight.

Notwithstanding all this, the author does not seem to feel very comfortable when developing the consummation scene. Interestingly, the author confronts a similar moral problem vis-à-vis the sacredness of matrimony to that faced by Chrétien in his *Chevalier de la Charrette*. Riquer claims that:

> Chrétien, gran defensor tostemps del vincle matrimonial, com palesen els conflictes entre les parelles Erec-Enida i Ivany-Laudina, i que havia lluitat amb totes les forces contra el *Tristany*, on el sacrament era sollat, ara es veu obligat per la seva senyora a escriure una novel·la el tema principal de la qual són els amors adulterins d'un cavaller, Lancelot, amb la reina Ginebra, esposa del rei Artús.[138] (Riquer [ed] 1990: 16)

Chrétien, however, resolves the moral tension is a very sophisticated and artful manner.

[138] My translation: "Chrétien had always been a great defender of the matrimonial bond as shown by the conflicts between the couples Erec-Enida and Ivan-Laudina. He had also fought against *Tristan*. But now he was forced by his lady to write a romance in which the main theme was the adulterous love between a knight, Lancelot, and Queen Guenevere, King Arthur's wife."

If the reader considers that as soon as Lancelot accepts to get into the cart,[139] the narrative line becomes polysemous, the culmination of Lancelot and Guenevere's *fin'amors* acquires significance far beyond the sexual union. Lancelot becomes a very particular Christ-like figure as Chrétien narrates Christ's story backwards from resurrection to annunciation. In this way, through the adulterous relationship of Lancelot of Guenevere, the author is criticising Lancelot's sacrilegious idolatry of Guenevere (Robertson 1963: 451-52). Chrétien appears to challenge the troubadour's claims that the ultimate consummation of *fin'amors* beyond orgasm is a mystical and spiritual fulfilment; that is, *lo miels*, "the ultimate happiness; the furthest limit of *jois*" (Topsfield 1984: 315). Yet, owing to the rich symbolism of Chrétien's narrative, other scholars such as Lewis have argued that the religious images in the consummation scene highlight Lancelot's true devotion and perfect obedience to Guevenere. (Lewis 1988: 29)

Lancelot of the Laik reduces the love plot and the characterisation of Lancelot himself. Following the literary elements shared with the other Scottish romances, the *makar* opts to concentrate on the martial aspects of knighthood and expresses his concern with good kingship (as seen in the first chapter) rather than to elaborate a predominantly courtly story. As opposed to Chrétien and the *Prose Lancelot,* some of the most important scenes of the *fin'amors* plot are just alluded to or not even mentioned. *Fin'amors* is not an evolving journey to the perfection of *amor*,[140] but a static state of the soul. The *makar*

[139] Lancelot must get on the cart in order to know where Guenevere is:

> Li nains cuiverz de pute orine
> Ne l'en vost noveles conter,
> Einz li dist: "Se tu viax monter
> Sor la charrete que je main,
> Savoir porras jusqu'a demain
> Que la reïne est devenue."
> (ll. 354-59)

[140] Perfection should be understood here as the final communion of spiritual and physical desire for the lover in the context of *fin'amors*, not as religious *caritas*.

assumes the intertextual knowledge of the story of some in the audience to fill the missing gaps. For the rest of the listeners, *Lancelot of the Laik* will have a meaning of its own.[141] As a result, the author composes a very distinct romance: while the relationship between Lancelot and Guenevere is enormously reduced, the didactic lesson of Amytans to Arthur is underlined. Arthur, whose appreciation of good government develops and changes, becomes the main character.

Golagros and Gawane and *The First Continuation*: Knighthood questioned, Gawain Regenerated

In the other Arthurian romance analysed, *Golagros and Gawane*, knighthood as a practical concept and ideal is thoroughly revised. This is especially noticeable when compared to its source, the *First Continuation* of Chrétien de Troyes' *Perceval*. Through a disenchanted representation of knightly practices, the *makar* questions the validity of a knight's life and code when placed at the service of dubious enterprises. He also redefines Gawain's role in the text: while the contrast between Kay's *vilania* and Gawain's *cortesia* is maintained and accentuated, the passages where the Gawain's seductive charms might be questionable are simply obliterated from the narrative.

As soon as Arthur and his knights return to Golagros' domains, the British king's imperialistic ambitions lead to martial conflict. The narration of these single or small group combats will reveal the cruellest and most realistic side of war:

> The tournament is, of course, originally an outgrowth of warfare and even in the earlier "tournament" literature there is a tendency to merge the two, but in

[141] According to Wolfgang Iser, the gaps in a text allow the reader to interact with it. His or her active participation by "filling the gaps" helps to create meaning: "the blank in the fictional text induces and guides the reader's constitutive activity" (Iser 1978: 202). Thus, all the missing gaps in *Lancelot of the Laik* would have been filled in different ways depending on the knowledge of the Lancelot story or of the prose original itself. This would have caused distinct interpretations of the same romance.

> *Golagros and Gawane* the deliberate attempt to revert to scenes of actual warfare is very apparent. (Ketrick 1931: 108)

This *realism* imposes a definite meaning on the text. Arthur and his knights are no longer representing chivalric aspirations in which the audience should find a mirror of behaviour. On the contrary, the author constructs a powerful set of scenes where he mistrusts the gratuitous use of authority, whose consequences can only bring about death and destruction:

> Thus thai faught upone fold, with ane fel fair,
> Quhill athir berne in that breth bokit in blude.
> Thus thai mellit on mold, ane myle way and maire,
> Wraithly wroht, as thei war witlese and wode.
>
> (ll. 570-73)

Arthur forces his knights into the devastating effects of fighting. The *makar* places emphasis on the cruelty of the confrontation. The knights, valiant though they are ("slithly thai stude," ll. 574), are represented as engaging in a fatal duel. Chivalric ideals are absent from these scenes. Jousting is not a celebration of courtly refinement as in the *First Continuation*, but the obnoxious result of the monarch's thirst for more earthly power and glory. The chivalric idealism of order and heroism is replaced by chaos and woe. It is not the archetypal fight between good and evil, heroes and villains; there are only winners and losers.

This becomes even more obvious when both texts, the original *First Continuation* and the Scottish romance, are closely compared. "In the French, [...] these jousts are conducted in accordance with the laws of the tournament, as seen clearly in the episode, where Kay, passing the boundaries of the four olive trees, is adjudged recreant" (Ketrick

1931 108-109); whereas in *Golagros and Gawane*, these passages are either devoid of any chivalric flair or just removed from the narrative. In the original prose, courtly conventions after violent but sportive confrontation peremptorily deny any disapprobation of knightly customs. After Bran de Lis defeats his opponent,

> En grant joie sunt puis le jour.
> Quant vint le soir vers la froidour,
> Si alerent trestout jouer.
> Molt par faisoit bel escouter
> Les gaites des tors qui cornoient,
> En pluisors sens se deduisoient.
> Ainc Dex cel estrument ne fist
> C'a mestier de gaite avenist,
> Que laiens n'oïsiés souner.
> Lors oïsiés les uns hüer,
> Et li autre s'entredisoient
> De bon gas, car trop en savoient.
>
> (ll. 5665-76)

Victory at the lists is rewarded with joy and feasting. Music and the different ways in which the knights celebrate Bran de Lis' success compensate for the harshness of real battle. This dialectic makes the reader forget about the violence of the fight. The chivalric ideal is underlined; and, therefore, the glory of military enterprise is magnified. The end justifies and minimises any previous sufferings. The moral concern of the Scottish romance, which is absent from these jousting passages, shows the different focus

of the two narratives.[142] The *First Continuation*, then, would be framed within "the literature which retailed these traditional stories [and] underpinned the values of chivalry by providing them with a faultlessly antique and highly evocative pedigree" (Keen 1984: 102).

Similarly, the jousting in the *First Continuation* is embellished with all the paraphernalia and stereotyped canons of the courtly norm. Although Arthur and his men are aware of the seriousness of *avanture* (they headed for the *Castel Orgueilleux* to set Giflet Fils de Do free), the emphasis on pleasure and enjoyment gives it more an air of a courtly excursion than of a military campaign:

> Molt par fu la vile estormie.
> Cil qui avoit la signorie
> Vint parmi les rues pognant,
> Aprés lui i vient de gent tant
> Que bien les oïrent movoir
> Cil del pavellon sans veoir.
> Tresc'a la porte le convoient,
> Ne sonent mot cil quil convoient.
> Covert entresc'a l'esperon
> De samit et de siglaton,
> Grant aleüre s'en ist fors,
> Le rice gonfanon destors.
> Lors veïsiés as murs monter
> Si grant puple por esgarder,

[142] Interestingly, the moral analysis, while not present in the justification of war, is a main consideration in Gawain's behaviour, whose promiscuity is eliminated by the Scottish author. This point will be discussed later in this section.

Par tot le castel environ,

Que n'estoit se mervelle non.

(ll. 6207-22)

The confrontation between Gawain and the Riche Soudoyer is recreated against a social backdrop, following the ritualistic proceedings of chivalry. Many people have gone there for enjoyment only. Their tension and expectation enhance the social as much as the festive nature of jousting. The author also takes pleasure in informing the audience about the richness of the Riche Soudoyer's attire. The fight itself becomes the central happening in a series of idealised descriptions designed as a perfect projection of chivalric behaviour.

By way of contrast, in *Golagros and Gawane*, the *makar* suppresses the colourfulness of his source. The result is a completely different narrative whose dialectics challenge the knightly practices epitomised in the *First Continuation* as exemplified in the fight between Sir Ranald and Sir Regal of Rone:

Thus thai faucht on fute, on the fair feild.

The blude famyt thame fra, on feild quhare thai found;

All the bernys on the bent about that beheild,

For pure sorow of that sight thai sighit unsound.

Schire teris schot fra schalkis, schene undir scheild,

Quhen thai foundrit and fel fey to the grund;

Baith thair hartis can brist braithly, but beild.

Thair wes na stalwart unstonait, so sterne wes the stound!

Schir Rannaldis body wes broght to the bright tent;

Syne to the castel of stone

Thai had Schir Regal of Rone;

With mekil murnyng and mone

Away with him went.

(ll. 635-47)

Heroism and the pomp of chivalry have nothing to do with these two knights' ineffectual deaths. Even if the beginning of the confrontation still captures the dignifying aspects of knighthood, "Thai lufly ledis belife lightit on the land, / And laught out swerdis, lufly and lang" (ll. 622-23), the author emphasises the realism of warfare rather than the artificiality of knightly language. This deliberate alteration subverts the idealism of the *First Continuation* and questions the validity of violence in the late medieval world. While the public of the original stands to witness a joust according to the established codes, the spectators in the Scottish version are the other warriors in the field. The *makar* defamiliarises the gaming and sociability of feigned battling. This dissociation is central to the author's discourse of anti-imperialistic denunciation. The constant references to blood[143] and the inglorious death of both adversaries undermine the very principles of chivalry and heroic deaths.

Although this disenchanted portrayal of knightly life is not present in the parallel passage of the *First Continuation*, Chrétien's masterfulness in integrating dialogic discourses in his text reveals a similar approach to some forms of chivalry. In the *Conte du Graal*, Chrétien writes:

Percevax, ce conte l'estoire,

A si perdue la memoire

Que de Deu ne li sovient mais.

[143] The allusions to violence and blood are constant in all the fights. In that between Gaudifier and Galiot, the same atmosphere of terror devoid of chivalry prevails: "Thus thai faught upone fold, with ane fel fair, / Quhill athir berne in that breth bokit in blude." (ll. 570-71)

.V. foiz passa avris et mais,
Ce sunt .V. anz trestuit antier,
Ainz que il entrast en mostier,
Ne Deu ne sa croiz n'aora.
A requerre chevalerie,
Que les estranges aventures,
Les felonesses et les dures
Aloit querant, [...][144]

(ll. 6143-53)

Two essential points are made: first, Perceval, the knight elected to seek the Grail, has forgotten about God. Thus he has left aside the highest goal of chivalry, defending God and the Holy Church. Secondly, arbitrariness and knightly deeds for their own sake rather than a meaningful *avanture* lead the hero's behaviour. In *Le Conte du Graal*, there are various instances of this implicit critique of meaningless chivalry, which may have been the inspiration either directly or indirectly of the Scottish poet.

Accordingly, although Hahn claims that "in *Gologras*, then, if honor and courtesy contain violence, violence no less contains courtesy" (Hahn [ed] 1995: 230), the arguments put forward accord better with Walsh's affirmation that

> this fifteenth-century story challenges many of the assumptions of medieval society and culture. It also reflects some of the preoccupations of the Scottish people. In a world that took warfare for granted, the poem speaks for peace; in a world which glorified the bonds between vassal and lord, the poem speaks for freedom. (Walsh 1989: 92)

[144] There is a body of opinion which believes this episode to be an interpolation justifying the *First* and *Second Continuations*.

The *makar* takes away most of the linguistic ornamentation which disguises war as a knightly and gallant game to expound its reality and outcome.

The final resolution of the romance emphasises the absurdity of the confrontation even further. Although in the next chapter it will be argued that Arthur experiences a partial (but not complete) learning process, the King of Britain's renunciation of Golagros' sworn fealty poses an extra question concerning the legitimacy and usefulness of war. Golagros' territory and his subjects regain freedom. The situation returns to the existing one prior to Arthur's invasion. Therefore, placing himself in a very moralistic position, the *makar* implicitly questions what the point of so many wasted lives is, should the situation remain the same. The end forces Arthur and his *pax arturica* into an unsustainable position. War and subjugation of smaller free lands is not the way to peace and order but to chaos and destruction. By the end of the romance, the reference to Scotland in the late Middle Ages becomes strong once again.

As for *cortesia*, the poem maintains the same contrast between Gawain and Kay already present in the *First Continuation*. In one of the first scenes, Kay offers to ask for some victuals in a nearby castle. His habitual rusticity is increased by his hunger: instead of doing his duty by asking for shelter and food, he takes a roasted bird from a dwarf and eats it (ll. 79-83). "Than dynnyt the duergh, in anger and yre" (l. 84). His behaviour could not be worse for a knight: not only does he steal and display bad manners, but he also takes advantage of his physical superiority towards an inferior who can do nothing to defend himself.

The characterisation of Kay is the Scottish romance is even more *vilana* than in the French original, in which the dwarf does not show a very welcoming attitude to Kay:

"Droit vers lui se traist Qex avant, / Et li nains li fist mal samblant" (ll. 3683-84). Moreover, when Kay asks him to give him the bird, the dwarf defies Kay in an impertinent way:

> "Ja Damredex ne li aït
> Qui en boce le vos metra;
> Miudres de vos le mangera.
> De ci vos en lo a ader,
> Ou ja vos en ferai aler
> Tresc'a peu molt vilainement."
>
> (ll. 3698-703)

The exclusion of these defiant words from *Golagros and Gawane* intensifies Kay's *vilania* even more. Uncourtliness and obnoxious abuse can only result in dishonourable expulsion from someone's household. By way of contrast, as Jack notes, Gawain's conduct is always fair and sometimes even charitable (Jack 1974-75: 7). His gentle and courteous demeanour is rewarded by the castle's lord, who kindly offers shelter to Arthur's party (ll. 149-52). The subtle different between both works highlights Gawain's *cortesia*, in particular, and his image as an ideal hero, in general, even more patently.

His sense of *cortesia* is tested again when Golagros asks him to feign defeat for his own sake and that of his vassals. Gawain is very moved by the fact that Golagros prefers death to dishonour: "The sege that schrenkis for na schame, the schent might hym schend, / That mare luffis his life than lois upon erd" (ll. 1077-78). Gawain's subsequent question intermingles his courtly conduct together with a deep humane feeling: "How may I succour the sound, semely in sale, / Before this pepill in plane, and pair noght thy pris?" (ll. 1092-93). His acceptance of Golagros' strange and dangerous petition to

accompany him to his castle faking defeat goes beyond standard *cortesia*. Jack suggests that such an attitude is grounded on spiritual concerns and operates as an illustration of genuine mercy (Jack 1974-75: 16). Therefore, in the Scottish text, Gawain's courtly and knightly behaviour is never questioned. Gawain, as in most late medieval romances written in the British Isles,[145] emerges as the incarnation of the perfect knight.

In the *First Continuation*, this scene is slightly but significantly different. The motives expounded by the Riche Soudoyer preferring death to surrender situate the work in a distinctively courtly context:

> Et quant ç'avint que il parla,
> Si crïa: "Dex! qui m'ocirra?"
> Puis dist: "Elle est morte et fenie,
> Si ne me caut mais qui m'ocie."
> [...]
> [...] "Ele est morte a estros,
> Par foi, del monde la mellor.
> Trop l'amoie de grant amor."
>
> (ll. 6307-10 / 6316-18)

The political and feudal concerns of *Golagros and Gawane* are not present in the original text. The defeat of her beloved will bring about the damsel's death (ll. 6375-78). *Fin'amors* and the feminine, which are totally alien to the Scottish version, stand as central aspects of the *First Continuation*:

> The courtly love motif is very evident in the episode of the Chastel Orguellous. It is totally suppressed in the Scottish poem. Instead, the

[145] In Northern English romances such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *The Awntyrs off Arthur* Gawain is portrayed as the main hero.

> Scottish poet turns the poem into a questioning of the warlike way of life which dominated medieval society. (Walsh 1989: 94)

Nevertheless, the reasons for the suppression of *fin'amors* in *Golagros and Gawane* are not exclusively political. The other *fin'amors* — or rather simply *amors* — scene obliterated in the Scottish text elucidates a different sort of motivation.[146] In the *First Continuation*, Gawain has to face a set of accusations, from which at least one is totally true:

> "Gavains, traïtres, n'en irois.
> La mort mon pere comparrois,
> Et mon oncle c'avés ocis.
> Le pucelage ravés pris
> De ma seror c'ui main trovastes;
> Certes mar la despucelastes."
>
> (ll. 4339-44)

Although Gawain might claim that the deaths of Bran de Lis' father and uncle occurred as a consequence of fair fight (ll. 4385-97), the deflowering of the damsel cannot be denied. Despite Arthur's mediation, Bran de Lis is not convinced by either Gawain or the king's arguments. Not until the lady appears with a child, does the combat stop:

> "Biaus ciers fius, alés orendroit
> A monsignor Bran de Lis droit;
> C'est vostre oncles, je sui sa suer.
> Biaus fius, ne vivroie a nul fuer
> S'il ocioit ne faisoit mat

[146] In the French romance, this section stands between the two episodes used in the Scottish text. But the *makar* opts not to use it.

Vostre pere a cui se conbat."

[...]

[the child] Puis dist : "Sire, ce dist ma mere

Que vos n'ociés pas mon pere."

(ll. 4923-28 / 4937-38)

This revelation ends the fight. Gawain's image as a perfect knight suffers from such a shocking disclosure. Previously, the seduction scene of the Damoisele de Lis is presented as an irrelevant "geus d'amors" (l. 1700), where Gawain displays his courtly and seductive manners. When he promises to return for her, it is never clear whether he is telling her what he is supposed to say according to the norms of *cortesia* or whether he really means it.[147] The sudden appearance of the child and its implications redefine the context of the seduction and make the audience question Gawain's excessively *courtly* behaviour.

Gawain cannot be the incarnation of the perfect knight. He is moving dangerously into the domain of *amor mixtus* (aiming at the consummation of sexual desire without the spiritual fulfilment of *fin'amors*). This also connotes a lack of *mesura*. Gawain even acknowledges his fault:

"Vos deveriés plus bel parler,

Car tos sui pres de l'amender,

S'ainc vos fis honte ne damage

Ne d'ami ne de pucelage,

Au los de trestos vos amis.

Por que n'i perde honeur ne pris

[147] The fact that the damsel tells the story to her family reveals that she was not sure about Gawain's promise, either.

Ne mi ami n'i aient honte;"

(ll. 1831-37)

Frappier claims that Gawain's words reflect that "il veut sauver l'honneur de la demoiselle en prenant sur lui toute la honte de l'aventure. Le séducteur se conduit ici en *gentleman*. [...] Tout s'explique par un raffinement de courtoisie et de générosité" (Frappier 1957-58: 339). Nevertheless, his own reputation and not that of the damsel seems to be the reason why he is disposed to redress his previous act. He refers to *his* "honeur" and "pris," two essential knightly virtues, which are at stake. The lady and her reputation are never suggested to be in the knight's mind. At a time when the legend of the Grail was becoming increasingly more religious than in Chrétien's *Conte du Graal*, the author of the *First Continuation* alerts the reader/hearer to the real perils and possible consequences of courtly games.

This suggests a second reason why the author of *Golagros and Gawane* suppresses this passage. While this *amors* episode was irrelevant owing the martial and political focus of romance, its inclusion would have damaged Gawain's representation as a perfect knight. The *makar* could not allow his main hero to undergo such a devastating criticism. Moreover, the long narrative of the French text permits the author to regenerate Gawain; whereas the Scottish work, as a comparatively short romance, could not have possibly devoted too many lines to question and then redeem Gawain.

In conclusion, the divergences of the two texts have demonstrated that the Scottish writer had a clear idea of the romance he wanted to write. The *First Continuation* provided him with a suitable story line in which he could add or suppress some elements to suit his own literary and ideological purposes:

The plot, and in many cases the actual phrasing of *Golagros* were undeniably

> derived from the *Perceval*. The themes, characterization, imagery, style and vocabulary here, however, belong wholly to the alliterative school. (Kelly 1975: 247).

Although Kelly's affirmation is correct, some refinements should be made. It has been argued that the plot itself is altered in order to suit the author's intentionality. As for Kelly's second assertion, although the poem does pertain to the "alliterative school," it is also true that the Scottish element, as opposed to the Northern English element, is palpable.[148] As for *fin'amors*, the *makar's* motives in suppressing the love plot are based, first, on his martial and political discourse following the Scottish tradition and, second, on the necessity to preserve Gawain as a virtuous hero at all times.

***Clariodus*: A Singular Case in the Scottish Romance Tradition**

Clariodus, written in the first half of the sixteenth century,[149] can be regarded as an anomalous text in the context of Scottish romance literature.[150] Thematically and ideologically, its major concerns are not national liberty, Scottish political reference or instructive passages on good kingship as found in *The Bruce*, *The Wallace*, and the Arthurian romances *Golagros and Gawane* and *Lancelot of the Laik*. Rhetorically,

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[148] As suggested in the first chapter, although there are clear thematic connections between *Golagros and Gawane* and *The Awntyrs off Arthure*, the Scottish context imposed a different composition in which the image of Arthur is more deeply criticised and his idea of kingship more thoroughly questioned.

[149] In the 1830 edition, an earlier date was suggested: "it [the manuscript] seems to have been written about the year 1550; but the composition is evidently of a much earlier date than the transcript, and may at least be referred to the close of the preceding century" (Piper [ed] 1830: ii). Yet, Purdie successfully argues that *Clariodus* is a sixteenth-century romance:

> The exact date of composition is unknown, but the first half of the sixteenth century is assured by the *terminus ad quem* of citation of "claryades and maliades" among many English and Scottish texts listed in the *c.* 1549 *Complaynt of Scotland*, combined with the *terminus a quo* supplied by *Clariodus'* demonstrable borrowing from William Dunbar's *The Goldyn Targe* and *The Thrissill and the Rois*. (Purdie 2002: 449)

[150] The fact that it is the only surviving romance of its kind does not mean that others, now lost, may have not existed. But, factually, this is the only evidence of such a peculiar text in the literature of late medieval Scotland.

Clariodus shares literary connections only with the prologue of *Lancelot of the Laik*. A first analysis of the text suggests that *Clariodus* could be a translation in the modern sense of the word, in which the major episodes occurring in *Cleriadus et Meliadice* (*c.* 1450-1470) are related very closely.[151] The representation and elaboration of chivalry and *fin'amors* are much closer to the French romance tradition than to the works analysed so far. Its Scottishness comes from a parallel contemporary tradition.

This rhetorical connection with *Lancelot of the Laik* goes beyond the adaptation of prose romances into verse. As Purdie proposes, there are two major formal aspects that situate the romance within a post-Chaucerian Scottish literary milieu. First, the use of the five-stress couplet, along the lines of the sophistication of courtly literature, was also deployed by Chaucer, Lydgate, Hary in his *Wallace*, Haye in his *Buik of Alexander* and the anonymous author of *Lancelot of the Laik* (Purdie 2002: 452-53). Second, *Clariodus'* employment of the "aureate" style and its borrowings from Dunbar's "The Thrissill and the Rois" (Purdie 2002: 456-58) reveal what the writer's intention was. Taking Dunbar as a model, he tries to introduce the thematic sophistication and elaboration of French chivalric romances to Scotland and to the Scottish taste. His preference for Dunbar and

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[151] One of the many good illustrations of this is the episode in which Clariodus is asked to be captain of the Crusades to liberate Cyprus:

> Then said Clariodus, I thank 3ow grittumlie,
> 3our Heines Sir, that me so nobillie
> List to advance into so heich renoune:
> Bot I ungrainand am; be this resoune,
> He sould ane lord be of gritter knowledge
> And wit of weirlie experience and age
> Nor am I: 3it to take sic thing on hand
> Nocht this I say, 3our Heichnes to gainstand;
> (III. 69-76)

The French text uses exactly the same two main reasons as expounded by Clariodus: there are better men in the realm and he is too young:

> — Sire, je vous mercie de cest honneur, car il ne me appartient pas et encores suis trop jeune pour avoir ung tel gouvernement et y en a en vostre royaume et en vostre court de trop plus saiges que je ne suis et meilleurs à avoir ceste office. (p. 276)

Then, although the metrical version demands some changes for the sake of rhyme, the same main ideas are expressed in both romances.

the "aureate" style instead of the long-standing romance tradition initiated by Barbour is necessary; otherwise, the development of overtly courtly components would not have been possible.

The great *makars*, Henryson, Dunbar and Douglas, composed their works in a humanist and broadly European writing atmosphere. It is probably for this reason that the author of *Clariodus*, who was following them, wrote a text that thematically has so little to do with the other romances. As Purdie points out, "in terms of plot there is nothing to distinguish it from others of its kind except perhaps the methodical thoroughness with which it trots out the standard motifs of medieval romance" (Purdie 2002: 449). In fact, this profusion of "standard motifs" are not the *makar's* invention but are imposed by the original itself. This connotes that the choice of *Cleriadus et Meliadice* as the source was a very deliberate decision. The French work displays practically all the possible romance *topoi*. In a country where all these traditional elements had been subverted, displaced or just ignored in the major romances from Barbour's time, the writer of *Clariodus* felt the need to find a romance which would deal with as many of those motifs as possible — hence the selection of *Cleriadus et Meliadice*.

The representation of *fin'amors* is very elaborate especially if the text is measured against works such as *Golagros and Gawain* or *Lancelot of the Laik*. The earliest instance of Clariodus and Meliades' mutual affection (I. 151-326) suggests that something may have happened — lacking in the manuscript[152] — in a previous encounter since the lady seems very willing to accept the knight's love service. The original French text reveals the intricacies of Cleriadus and Meliadice's first meeting, in which Cleriadus

[152] The fact that the only surviving manuscript lacks a number of pages both at the beginning and at the end may be one of the reasons why so little interest has been shown in the romance: "it commences with the eighth folio and appears to want one or two pages at the conclusion." (Maitland Club [ed] 1830: ii)

is instantaneously captivated by Meliadice's beauty and elegance:

> Cleriadus la regardoit moult fort et entierement et plus la veoit et mieulx lui plaisoit, car elle estoit plaine de merveilleuse beaulté et, si sa beaulté lui plaist, et son maintien si lui revient et agree. [...] Amours l'ont prins, Amours le tiennent, Amours l'ont lié de leurs liens et du tout se soubzmet Cleriadus à leur ordonnace et aussi ou service de la belle Meliadice. (p. 14)

Cleriadus manages to impress Meliadice through his courtly and knightly abilities. He embodies the perfect combination of the feminine and the masculine in a knight: he dances and sings at court (pp. 15-16) and is a champion in the lists (p. 39). At this point, the surviving folios of Scottish romance begin when Clariodus is recovering from the wounds caused by the single combat to defend England's honour.

In the first passage of the Scottish text, the narrative line introduces courtly conventions. Meliades, as a worthy damsel, visits Clariodus accompanied by some ladies in so far as they are still not *amis*. After having eulogised his *proeza* (in this passage, I. 185-94, she already calls him "[...] ȝe my tender friend Clariodus,"),[153] the knight reveals that she has been the real cause of his victory (I. 237-58). This reverts to the courtly *topos* of *amor et militia*. He also tells her about his love and praises her courtly attributes again. The author, having in mind the angel-like nature and innocence of the lady, does not allow her to requite his love straightforwardly, but causes her to hesitate for a while, before she admits that she is in love with him, too (I. 285-302) provided that he is "obedient and secret." At this point, she kisses him (I. 309-10). That she takes the initiative does not mean that all of a sudden the poet has transformed her into a more determined girl, but this points to the way in which the conventions of *fin'amors* worked.

[153] The same term is used in the original: "Cleriadus, mon amy [...]" (p. 45)

As already mentioned, when commenting on the *Prose Lancelot,* in the same way as a lord kissed a vassal who paid fealty, the lady kissed the lover who entered the service of love. As a consequence of his being accepted as her *fin amant*, Clariodus' wounds symbolically heal quicker (I. 327-30). This elaborate scene together with the careful selection of language creates the appropriate atmosphere for the sophistication of *fin'amors* in a much richer way than in any other of Scottish chivalric romances. The mimetic translation of the French original is patent in this passage. The Scottish writer retells in verse all the major incidents appearing in this section of chapter IV (pp. 43-53) of *Cleriadus et Meliadice*.

Also following the original story line, the *makar* relates how Clariodus tells Meliades that he has to depart because his sister is going to marry the king of Spain. Meliades understands that he has to go for the "love of knighthood." This disposition to become a knight errant was encouraged during the late Middle Ages in Europe as manuals of chivalry such as Charny's *Livre de chevalerie* prove:

> Si dirons de ceulx qui entendent leurs corps a faire par grant emprise d'entreprendre a aler en lointains voiages et pelerinages et en pluseurs païs estranges et loitains, et moult d'estranges choses et diverses peuent veoir. [...] Et pour ce devons nous telz gens d'armes honorer qui a grant mise et grant travail et grant peril se mettent. (Geoffroi de Charny 1996: 90)

At the level of the knight's learning process, this departure is the perfect excuse for Clariodus to become a better knight and gain world-wide fame through his *avantures* through "moult d'estranges choses." The hero's departure will also develop the theme of *amor de lohn* between the two young lovers. Before leaving for "Estur" (Asturias), according to the courtly tradition, they interchange presents: she gives him a heart of

gold, and he gives her a bracelet of gold (I. 444-52). Although the Scottish author is writing in verse, the closeness of the Scottish translation is evident. The gifts that Cleriadus and Meliadice interchange are exactly the same: "un braselet d'or" and "un cueur d'or" (p. 78).

In the following episode, some of the conventional elements in a knight's career appear. The supernatural and knightly deeds are interlinked. In a very typical episode of romances, he rescues a lady with the help of a dwarf in the Wood of Eventouris (I. 461-540).[154] After this deed, there is a transition from individual merit to widely recognised fame in a tournament in "Estur" (I. 697-790). Upon his dexterity in all the combats in which he takes part:

> Foure aigit knichts the King gart efter send,
> And foure heraldis that best armis kend,
> And bade that on thair trewth it sould be schawd,
> Of tornament quha wan maist praise and laud.
> Thay answeir maid, and said, with voice on height,
> Thay have weill previt everie nobill knicht
> As men of deidis wondour chevalrus;
> Bot all the praise we gif Clariodus.
>
> (I. 783-90)

The "aigit knichts" operate as distinguished figures whose judgement is beyond doubt. His knightly abilities in the lists are unquestionable.

In the next stage of his learning process, motifs traditionally associated with journeys to the Other World appear. Yet, these scenes do not seem to be as exploited as they could

[154] According to tradition, this is one of the duties of a knight: "toutes bonnes gens d'armes sont tenuz de droit de garder et deffendre l'onnour de toutes dames contre tous ceulx qui voudroient dire ne mesdire ne faire le contraire." (Geoffroi de Charny 1996: 94)

be. First, the Peninsula becomes an allegorical representation of the Other World, where not only will Clariodus confront enchanted beasts, but he will also be tempted. Then, Clariodus himself disguises himself as the Green Knight. The *topos* of combating supernatural forces is displayed at the beginning of the learning process following traditional romance standards. Clariodus fights a lion which is terrifying Galicia (I. 855-78). The animal, although fatally hurt, instead of dying, becomes a knight who was the victim of a terrible spell due to his being a "knave child" (I. 939-1039). Allegorically, Clariodus accomplishes an act of civilising and controlling the forces of nature, while tropologically his *avantures* are designed to emphasise physical *fortitudo*.

The king of Galicia invites Clariodus to stay in his castle with the purpose of healing his wounds; the queen and her daughter take care of him and sing beautiful songs in the most courteous manner. He feels really happy and does not seem to be in a hurry to go back to England (I. 1140-204). This passage seems to be designed along the lines of the *locus communis* of the temptress, who challenges the knight's mental *fortitudo* and chastity. In the French romance, the queen and her daughter visit Cleriadus' room:

> La royne envoye tantost querir sa fille et fait ce que le roy lui a mandé. Si s'en va tout droit en la chambre de Cleriadus et entre dedens, [et] sa fille avec ses dammes et damoiselles, dont il y en avoit grant foison de belles et de gracieuses [...]. Adonc, Cadore [the princess] commença à dire une chançon, de si grant sentement et tant bien que Cleriadus estoit tout esmerveillé de l'oïr. (pp. 139-41)

Yet, after the construction of the perfect atmosphere to test Cleriadus' loyalty to Meliadice, the reader is informed of a fact which will undermine his or her expectations: the reason for the knight's stupefaction was because "elle [the princess] n'avoit pas plus

hault de sept ans" (p. 141). This revelation does away with the motif of the temptress. The Scottish text, which thematically follows the original so closely, does not elaborate on the possibility of transforming either the queen or her daughter into a seducer. In fact, as soon as Palexis and Amadour, who were seeking him, show him the black heart Meliades has sent him, he realises what his duty is and returns to England. The powerful symbolism of the black heart (as opposed to the "heart of gold") makes him react immediately. Surprisingly, the temptation scene is not further developed. The author does not exploit the possibilities of the charming ladies in the castle. It would have been easy to assign more importance to their role as happens in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Conversely, although the young Clariodus innocently takes to the pleasures of life (chivalric *recreantise*), as soon as he is reminded of his beloved princess, he demonstrates his psychological *fortitudo* and returns to the right way. Clariodus' temporal/cardinal virtues are reaffirmed.[155]

In the other episode in which the supernatural could have been developed further, Clariodus/Cleriadus disguises himself as the Green Knight/Chevalier Vert to participate in a tourney that is taking place in England. The hero going incognito gets pleasure from confronting all the English knights as a kind of game. First he vanquishes his cousins Amadour (II. 1019-28) and Palexis (II. 1120-69).[156] After this, he defeats up to thirty

[155] In the other long Scottish romance which does not follow the thematic patterns of the historical and Arthurian texts, *Sir Eger and Sir Gryme* (first mentioned in 1497), the supernatural and the Other World in is represented as much more dangerous and obscure. If in *Clariodus*, the hero's subjection of supernatural creatures (the enchanted lion/knight) and potential temptresses is rather facile, Eger's brutal fight with the gigantic Red Knight (ll. 136-207) conditions the development of the narrative and brings about terrible consequences for the protagonist. He loses not only his combat but also his lady's love as she does not want to marry a defeated knight. Eger's long-lasting recovery from his wounds becomes a symbolic paralysis after being vanquished. The quest in order to restore his honour and regain his beloved Winliane's affection will have to be carried out by his best friend Gryme. Unlike in *Clariodus*, the force of the supernatural and its interaction with the courtly world is present all through the text.

[156] Here again, the author is not interested in exploiting all the dramatic possibilities of having Clariodus fighting his cousins. Instead, he prefers maintaining a rather relaxed tone ornamented with some comic elements such as Palexis admitting the resemblance between the Green Knight and Clariodus, but unable to unveil the trick:

other warriors. The previously challenged Clariodus, then, becomes the challenger. The civilising knight feigns the threat of the supernatural by becoming a green knight. Nevertheless, both in *Cleriadus et Medialice* and in *Clariodus* the English knights do not fear the Green Knight because of his association with the supernatural, but only because of his dexterity in the lists. All this seems to suggest that the hero is putting the *proeza* of all the English knights to test, who, by the simple fact of accepting to joust, submit to the trial. Role transference, of which this is the first example, constitutes an important feature of the work. Clariodus' shift of role from a knight to a challenger of knights implies his superiority with regard to the rest of them all.

In the meantime, in the two romances the hero secretly visits Meliades to demonstrate his validity as a *fin amant*: they meet by night when everybody thinks that Clariodus is seeking adventures in Denmark. They speak, kiss each other and spend the night together. The poet stops his account here. As in the previous scenes dealing with their love affair, the language used is that of the troubadours, as the construction of the awakening reveals:

> The day aprocht, quhairof they war effeirit.
> Romaryn said, it wilbe day alsweith,
> And thairof war thir lovers nothing blyth;
> They tuike thair leave at uthers imbracing,
> With pitious wirdis, and with kissing,
> With sorrowfull sighing, and with tirie face;
>
> (II. 654-59)

Palexis said, Gif that Clariodus
War in the land, quhilk is unkend to us,
I wald say surlie the Greine Knicht war he,
He is so lyke to him in all degree.
(II. 1013-16)

The schema of the narrative closely follows that of an *alba*,[157] in which the faithful servant or friend (in this case Romaryn) watches all night long so that the two *fins amants* may enjoy their love. At sunset, the friend warns them that the lover should leave before they are discovered. Sorrow is inevitable when Clariodus must depart.

Although both *fins amants* experience the effects of love, this does not have any negative effects on the martial performance of Clariodus. The two of them seem to undergo similar and contradictory emotions. The hero is "Now braiding in his dreime for joy, / And now scarting for langour and for noy" (II. 1373-74). As for the heroine, on seeing him on the lists,

> To se him ryd so knichtlie in his weid,
> That love hir sa streinȝeit withoutin dreid,
> That it ane seikness grew about hir heart,
> That suddant start scho micht it not escart
> Of Cupidis bow so big againis hir bent,
> From quhilk ane hundreth awfull dartis went
> Ilk efter uther, with woundis greine and new,

[157] Compare to Geraut de Bornelh's (*c.* 1162-1199) *Reis Glorios*:

> Bel companho, si dormetz o velhatz,
> no dormatz plus, suau vos ressidatz;
> qu'en orien vei l'estela creguda
> c'amena·l jorn, qu'eu l'ai be conoguda,
> et ades sera l'alba!
>
> Bel companho, en chantan vos apel;
> no dormatz plus, qu'eu auch chantar l'auzel
> que vai queren lo jorn per lo boschatge
> et ai paor que·l gilos vos assatge
> et ades sera l'alba!
>
> (ll. 6-15)

"Good friend, if you sleep or are awake, / do not sleep any longer, get up soon; / the star (the sun) is rising from orient / announcing the brand new day; I have recognised it, / and soon dawn will break."
"Good friend, singing I call you; / do not sleep any longer, I can already hear the bird singing / that seeks the morning through the forest / and I fear the jealous one might see you / and soon dawn will break." (my translation)

Throw quhais stoundis scho oft changit hew,
Almaist hir passioun insufferabill,
Amongs them also scho is to sune abill;
And efter that scho wald recover a stound,
And with sic comfort and great joy abound,
That uneis for glaidnes scho micht conteine;
And thus for love this lufty Lady beine.

(II. 1497-510)

The author incorporates all the necessary *loci communes* coming from the Ovidian and troubadour traditions to provide his love story with the perfect ambience for *fin'amors*. Both the personification of love in the figure of Cupid and his bow with its arrows causing sweet sorrow and the continuous changes in mood from passion "insufferabill" to "joy" illustrate the writer's willingness to follow the established lyric patterns of love. With the deployment of all these motifs, the writer intends to make Clariadus and Meliades' love equal to that of the greatest and much more famous medieval *fins amants*. Tristan and Yseult, Lancelot and Guenevere or Floris and Blanchefleur all experience similar symptoms when away from their lovers.

It is in the third book, when Clariodus is elevated to the status of "capitane" and "governour" of the English army, that the other elements of his knighthood are more prominently emphasised. In his first mission, he departs for Cyprus in order to help the king of the island to get rid of the invading Turkish troops (III. 59-68). Although in the most elementary literal interpretation he is progressing to a more powerful position, in allegorical terms he is given the much more important opportunity of becoming the champion of Christendom against the heathen. As well as becoming a champion of

Christendom, Clariodus also reinforces the bonds between Christian kingdoms and wins the favour of the courts of France and Cyprus. In spiritual terms, he is the defender of the Christian faith. In the political arena, he gains the recognition, admiration and friendship of some important figures such as the constable of France.[158]

It is in this crusade that his *proeza* and his love for Meliades find common ground again. In III. 1029-43, Clariodus admits that he wants the war to be finished as soon as possible so that he can return to England with his beloved. Notwithstanding his anxiety about accelerating the end of the confrontation, Clariodus is never portrayed as being driven by *foudatz*. The next day, he resolves to take the lead and attacks directly the "Caine" of Turkey, whom he kills rather easily (III. 1078-81).[159] The *amor et militia topos* is deployed again, but now in the context of a holy war. The crusade motif intermingles with *fin'amors*. In this scenario, the purity of their love is highlighted.

In the meantime, Thomas, king Phillipon's treacherous brother, accuses the couple of betraying the king. Meliades is sentenced to death, from which she manages to escape because her executioners think that "For verilie we think it grit pitie, / To slay ane Ladie of so grit bewtie" (III. 672-73). Her courtly virtues save her life. Nonetheless, like the rest of the court, Clariodus thinks that she is dead. He cannot cope with such a setback and "[...] still he lay thair deid as out of lyfe, / And nothing lyke from daith for to revert" (III. 1532-33). The *fausse mort* motif is a *locus communis* of late medieval literature: a

[158] This sort of development is very typical of the fifteenth-century French romances in which fantasy and history intermingle involving the hero's intervention crusades. As mentioned earlier, the same thing happens in the Catalan prose romance *Tirant lo Blanc* (1492), in which Tirant, the hero, fights the heathen who had invaded England. Afterwards, he also leads a crusade.

[159] Here again, the closeness of the translation is evident. Cleriadus kills "le grans Cans de Turquie" rather easily:

> Cleriadus avoit recouvré une lance grosse et forte si vient au Sarrazin par grant vitesse et hardement et le Sarrazin aussi contre lui. Cleriadus le fiert si roidement en son venir que il lui mect fer et fust parmy le corps et l'abat tout mort à terre. (p. 288)

Being used to listening to martial-based romances, the Scottish audience might have been a little shocked with the rapid dismissal and lack of martial action in this scene.

fin amant who loses her/his partner and cannot conceive a world without her/him.

Clariodus' lamentation after he recovers from this catatonic state is slightly but significantly different from the words uttered by Cleriadus. In the French text, the hero says:

> "Hellas! que feray je? que diray je ne où yray je desormais en avant, quant j'ay perdu la plus belle, la meilleur, la plus adornee de toutes belles et bonnes taches qui fust, pour femmes mortelles, en cest monde et celle qui estoit commencement et moyen de tot mon bien et mon honneur et l'adresse de tous mes affaires?" (p. 348)

The Scottish author develops the lamentation in a different manner:

> Alleace! he said, quhat sall I do or say,
> My warldis joy is from me reft for ay;
> O now quhair sall I go or quhair sall I ryd,
> Quhair sall I walke at evin or morrow tyd!
> Whairto for sleip sould I to bedis go,
> Or quhairto ryse, I waits of nocht but wo,
> Or quhairto leive I, now thus myne allone,
> When all my cumpanie is fra me gone;
> O Death, cum slay me cative in distres,
> That never sall have ane day of mirrines!
> Why lests my bodie, seing my heart is slaine,
> Fairweill for ever all eardlie joy againe!
>
> (III. 1557-68)

At first sight, it could be argued that, despite his close translation of the original, in this

particular passage the *makar* opted to express the lover's sorrow in a different way. Therefore, the main difference between the French and the Scottish passages would be the form but not the meaning. Yet, within the late medieval Scottish literary tradition, the author of *Clariodus* concentrates on a favourite *topos* of the great *makars*. He emphasises the idea of the arbitrary changes in the Wheel of Fortune along the lines of Boethius' *De Consolatione*. The hero, who so far has enjoyed the pleasures of *fin'amors* and chivalric glory, now must endure the reversal of *Fortuna*, which will help him to understand the meaning of happiness and the real value of worldly things. Unlike the French author, the *makar* skilfully places "warldly joy" and "eardly joy" at the beginning and at the end of the knight's lamentation.[160] His words at once accentuate the mutability of earthly values and place them within the transcendental ambit of God's eternal *beatitudo*.

Subsequently, Clariodus heads for King Philippon's castle to ask for justice in a very civilised manner. Instead of taking revenge directly on Thomas, he opts to tell the monarch about the former's treachery, a fact which highlight the hero's *mesura* (temperance) and his sense of *justice* according to law. Clariodus reverts to the judicial system (earthly order) to denounce not only a human crime, but also the reversal of *Fortuna* within the divinely structured order. Consequently, legal justice will not and cannot be totally satisfactory. The truth is rapidly unveiled, since Thomas does not dare to confront Clariodus (III. 1679-775). The hero's grief, however, is not relieved.

After this, the sad knight begins his learning about humility and self-understanding. During his journey back home, he changes clothes with a pilgrim (III. 1907-26). Significantly, the pilgrim's words refer to the mutability of earthly possessions and the

[160] Although it is obvious that the French Cleriadus is also complaining about his fortune, the words of the Scottish Clariodus set his speech in a more precise Aristotelian-Boethian context.

constant changes in the Wheel of Fortune, anticipating Clariodus' good fortune again:

> The Palmer said, My lord, I weill persave,
> That seiknes or melancholie 3e have;
> Have patience in distres for any thing,
> For naturallie the warld is ay changing,
> And glad joy cumis nixt adversitie
> Be cours of fortounis mutabilitie.
>
> (III. 1919-24)

Again as in the case of Cleriadus' lamentation, the pilgrim in the French original does not specifically refer to fortune directly; instead, he consoles Cleriadus in a different manner:

> "Sire, allez en la garde Nostre Seigneur, car vous me semblez moult courroucé. Mais aiez bonne fience en Dieu et sa doulce mere, car ilz vous donneront encores autant de joye que vous eustes oncques." (p. 368)

The Scottish author's subtle use of words places Clariodus' lament in the same Boethian context as in the previous scene. Allegorically, the knight becomes the pilgrim, the rich (he changes his elegant clothes for the pilgrim's robe) becomes the poor; he renounces to his rank and earthly possessions with the purpose of learning. Here his pilgrimage begins: he embarks to Asturias working as a sailor (III. 1941-60). Meliades has also accepted her new humble position working as a tailor, taking the identity of Ladar. One day, she sees a man crying and lamenting his bad fortune (III. 1981-2000). At first, they do not recognise each other, but after Clariodus explains the story of his life, they finally realise to whom they are talking. Nevertheless, at this point, the hearer/reader can only suppose that they both have learnt something from their terrible experiences, in so far as

there are no conclusive hints revealing this inner progression.[161]

Not until more than two thousand lines later can the real impact of what they have learnt be appreciated. On their way back to England, Meliades receives a letter from her father announcing her that he wants her to get married. On not knowing who is going to be her future husband, she assumes that he will be a person other than Clariodus. This uncertainty about their future and the idea that *Fortuna* has tricked them again is employed to show that both *fin'amants* have evolved to a better understanding of the world. Although they are very sad, to the extent that Meliades claims that she prefers being dead to not marrying Clariodus (IV. 1853-99), the knight attempts to console her, demonstrating a very sensible attitude. When she asks him whom he would like her to marry, he admits that:

> Gif it sould be as I wald wisch, I say
>
> I wald no wight in world ȝow had bot I,
>
> [...]
>
> [she responds] I ȝow promit I sall no husband have,
>
> Bot quhom ȝe wald I hade, sa God me save.
>
> (IV. 2241-42 / 2255-56)[162]

While they still undertake the oath of being loyal to one another, the calm and less dramatically passionate tone of the lovers proves that they have undergone an inner progression. The lesson in humility and self-understanding has been effective. In Boethian terms, they have managed to learn from the tricks caused by the wicked *Lady Fortuna*. Allegorically, their love now is more mature: they have progressed from the

[161] This internal progression of the protagonists while living privative conditions is very typical of romances. In the Provençal *Chanson de Girart de Roussillon*, the time Girart and Berta spend living in the forest help Girard to transform spiritually, as Martines highlights (Martines 1995: 141).

[162] Again, the scene in the original is practically the same. In spite of their profound sadness, Cleriadus' words to Meliadice show a very mature attitude at this point (p. 518-19).

furtive love of young *fins amants* to the kind of love which will lead them to matrimony (although this they do not know yet).

As soon as they arrive in London, the hero is informed that he has been the elect to succeed the old King of Ireland, who happens to be his mother's brother (this is the first time this relative is ever mentioned). In IV. 2360-410, both *fins amants* are placed at the same social level just before the wedding. In courtly terms, however, Clariodus ambivalently plays the game of *fin'amors*. After taking his crown off, he visits Meliades' room, and so the latter addresses him

> Saying to him, with smylling countinance,
> Is this the fassioun of ane King, said sche,
> So quyetlie to cum in this degrie
> Into ane chalmer quhair ladies dois abyde?
> Scho set him on ane cuscheine hir besyde.
> He said to hir thir wordis secreitlie,
> Nather King, Earle, nor 3it ane Duike am I,
> Nor uther Lord, Madame, in 3our presence,
> Bot 3our awin Knight to doe 3ow reverence
> To 3ow abone all uther warldis wight,
> Alse long as I have ather wite or might.
>
> (IV. 2554-64)

The author still sticks to the secrecy of *fin'amors* in rather symbolic terms. Although socially they already pertain to the same social stratum, Clariodus symbolically gets rid of his crown to visit her. Meliades very kindly refers to his new status as a king, whereas the hero still wants to play the role of the classical *fin amant*, confessing that before her

he is still the thrall performing the service of love. There is a dualism between the relationship of a king and a princess and the *fin'amants'* game of female *lordship* according to the courtly tradition. This passage stresses love as the prime motivation of their marriage.

At last, King Philoppon announces his intention to marry his only daughter to Clariodus:

> I sall him [Clariodus] geive the thing I love best,
> That is my Doghter, heare of this regioun,
> Thairto I gif my kingdom and my croun
> Heir unto him with hir in marriage,
>
> (IV. 2708-31)[163]

The king does not mention as a reason for this marriage the love between Clariodus and Meliades, but he rather interprets their union in the light of the realistic situation of marriages among the nobility and royal families in the late Middle Ages. He refers to the material properties which the husband will inherit owing to the union. Like the author of *Le Roman du Enéas*, the *makar* conflates the concept of *fin'amors* with the ideal marriage to the perfect lady who will bestow a lot of power and property on the hero. In this way, Clariodus will become one of the most powerful kings in Europe just as Enéas gains control over Latinium (the basis for the future Roman Empire) thanks to his marriage to Lavinia. Thus, the Scottish *makar* (like the French poet) disguises the materialistic contract of matrimony with the idealisation of *fin'amors*.

The preparations for the wedding take place. Again, the Scottish author follows the detailed account of *Cleriadus et Meliadice* very closely. The queens and kings of some of

[163] Line numbering jumps from 2700 to 2730 (instead of 2710) without any explanation on the editor's part.

the most representative European kingdoms are invited to the feasting around the wedding: they come from France, Spain, Garnat, Galicia and Ireland (V. 260-374). After more than 700 lines of feasting and courtly games, they get married (V. 722-34). All these long descriptions of European monarchs and nobles enjoying pleasures together (not only here, but also all through the romance) may point to an ideal situation in which all Christian kingdoms could live in peace.[164] This hypothesis is also supported by the fact that, apart from Thomas, there are no real villains in *Clariodus*. All the knights who are defeated by the hero end up swearing that they will redress their behaviour; and, eventually, they seem to do so.[165] Therefore, this constant enjoyment of courtly life might be interpreted as an allegory of an idealised harmony among all the Christian realms, to which Clariodus would be the major contributor.

Finally, in an idealised dream of brotherhood and happiness, the *fins amants* consummate their love within the sacrament of matrimony:[166]

> Clariodus to fair Meliades
>
> Enterit in bed quhom Venus did convoy,
>
> Not in his bed bot in his hevin of joy.
>
> What is thair mair, bot that the floure of armis
>
> Ane rose of bewtie lapit in his armis;
>
> And so thir two thay enterit in thair blise,

[164] In Philippe de Mézières' *Songe du Vieil Pelerin* (*c.* 1389), Royne Verite overtly advocates the same idea:

> "Par le xii[e] point du second quartier du moral eschequier," dist la royne Verite, "jeune Moyse couronne, il t'est demoustre que par le bon pourchaz de ta royale mageste entre les roys et princes catholiques et les grans communes ait une bonne amitie et une ferme union." (Book III. 247)

[165] This literary motif is already present in Chrétien de Troyes' romances, in which Arthur's knights send the defeated enemies to the king's court so that they can be reformed.

[166] Before that, however, there is still another (probably unnecessary) adventure, in which the intervention of Clariodus saves the honour of a group of ladies. He heroically prevents the maidens from being deflowered by fifteen knights, although he is clearly outnumbered. As happened in earlier combats, the vanquished wrongdoers accept to become good knights. (V. 1138-1231)

Whilk with thair meritis weill deservit is;
And thay, that lovit uther above all things,
Passit that night with joy and thair lykings,
Quhilk joy doubtles ful deir was coft befor,
Whairfor thair joy ay multipliet the more.

(V. 1676-86)

The continual emphasis placed by the *makar* on the word *joi* — being one of the key terms in the poetry of the Troubadours and in *fin'amors* — is of the greatest importance. As in the poetry of the Troubadours, there is an interplay between the symbolism of sacred language and that of amorous ecstasy when the *makar* uses "his hevin of joy." Therefore, in this passage both of them reach this state in the highest possible degree, *lo miels*. The floral symbolism of the phrase "Ane rose of bewtie lapit in his armis" may refer to the lady's virginity being deflowered for the first time. This would confirm the hypothesis that in the second book they did not transgress the social norms, although they spent the night together.

In conclusion, in *Clariodus*, the application and development of the concept of *fin'amors* is unique in the Scottish literature of the time. The hero's career evolves in a way quite intimately connected to the love plot. Clariodus, owing to his chivalric and knightly virtues, manages first to become the best knight on earth; next, to lead the Christian army in Cyprus (thus, becoming both a military leader and the champion of Christendom), and finally, he attains the status of king thanks to his mother's brother and his marriage to Meliades. The extensive and profuse descriptions of courtly feasts attended by the Christian monarchs and nobles may allegorically represent an idealised state of peace among Christian nations. Thematically, the translation is very close to the

original *Cleriadus et Meliadice*. Rhetorically, however, the author wants to write within the parameters of the great *makars*. He deploys the aureate style typical from the courtly poetry of late medieval Scotland and introduces a Boethian disquisition about the mutability of earthly life and possessions.

Conclusion

When composing *The Bruce*, Barbour created a text which was used as the basis for a new literary, vernacular tradition in the writing of romances after the Wars of Independence. Notwithstanding Chaucer's immense impact on the *makars* of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Barbour's conceptual elaboration of chivalric and courtly notions established a set of innovations which would be reflected and developed in the romances of Scotland during the late Middle Ages. In Hary's *Wallace,* some of these characteristic elements, such as the predominance of the masculine aspects of a knight's life, prevailed, whereas other features evolved according to the more sophisticated rhetoric of his times. Even when adapting French originals, the writers of *Golagros and Gawane* and *Lancelot of the Laik* concentrated on martial action rather than on embellished depictions of courtly manners and etiquette. They selected and re-adapted the French material to their own literary and ideological purposes. Consequently, in these four works, together with *Rauf Coilyear*, some of the typical aspects of the *roman courtois* tradition were profoundly altered. The pre-eminence of knighthood on the battlefield reduced the representation of social interactions at court. *Cortesia*, though present, lacks the sophisticated ornamentation and exposition of the French romances. This characteristic, as Crane asserts, was also typical of English romances (Crane 1986: 135-38). Female characters seldom dominate the scene: typical

roles, such as lady helpers, are redefined in the Scottish context. *Fin'amors* is marginalised or completely obliterated from the texts to the extent that even in *Lancelot of the Laik* it is not the central issue. The sole exception to this clearly differentiated literary tradition within the European context is *Clariodus*, a later romance, which does not respond to any of the points just mentioned. As Purdie suggests, the author's intention was to write a romance in the fashion of the great courtly *makars* of his time (Purdie 2002: 453). The choice of the original also indicates that the translator of *Clariodus* intended to write in a more Continental milieu, taking the French tradition as a reference point. He deployed all the possible romance *topoi* to exhaustion.

CHAPTER 4

THE HERO'S INNER PROGRESSION IN THE SCOTTISH ROMANCES

Introduction

One of the most frequent *topoi* of late medieval romances is the hero's progression from youth into maturity through a series of tests. The Scottish romances are not an exception: it is common practice for the *makars* to represent their main characters undergoing a learning process — either spiritual, moral or physical — as a part of the accomplishment of their quests both in chivalric and historical romances. This spiritual or ethic education should not be seen as an exclusive and distinctive Scottish characteristic, however, unless some particular elements so define them. It will be argued that national concerns such as nation, identity or kingship are closely connected to the heroes' respective inner developments. Links between spiritual and political concerns characterise both the historical and the Arthurian compositions.

Yet not all the *makars* draw their hero's journey in the same way. Thus the four romances offer different layers of interpretation, depending on the disposition of their work. Although referring to sacred texts, Hugh of St Victor Hugh's "house-bricks" metaphor is an excellent tool to understand the distinct significance of each level of meaning:

> In this question it is not without value to call to mind what we see happen in the construction of buildings, where first the foundation is laid, then the structure is raised upon it, and finally, when the work is all finished, the house is decorated by the laying on the color. (*Didascalicon*, VI. ii)

Within this structure, the anagogic, the allegorical and the tropological significance may be found. While this is applicable to holy works in general, when dealing with

secular texts, a reader is not supposed to find all the levels of interpretation in each composition.

In the Scottish romances, allegory is present in various and diverse forms. The *makars* develop alternative narrative strategies to provide their works with the appropriate referential signs so that an allegorical meaning can be deciphered. Different literary modes are used: Barbour and Hary's accounts of the Wars of Independence constitute two distinct approaches to the elaboration of their romances. In *The Wallace*, there is a consciously allegorical fabric of the text. The hero's characterisation is assembled not only through the chivalric adventures typical of the *roman courtois* tradition but also along the lines of a martyr's or saint's *vita.* I will be argued that Wallace's progression becomes a heroic and spiritual pilgrimage, which, through history, is elevated to the mysteries of anagogy. In *The Bruce*, the main character's spiritual maturation is devised through historical events and knightly action. As Dante would define it, *The Bruce*, though not possessing a complete allegorical structure, is polysemous (Dante in Minnis *et al.* [ed.] 2000: 459-60). The two historical narratives culminate with the perfect representation (and glorification) of death.

In the Arthurian romances, Arthur's progress is also elaborated in different ways, relocating the narrative focus of the French originals. In *Golagros and Gawane*, the questioning of arbitrary warfare and violence becomes the ideal setting for Arthur's spiritual regeneration. Coming from the Advice to Princes tradition, *Lancelot of the Laik* can be regarded as the less spiritual of the four romances. Instead, moral and ethical concerns are emphasised in Arthur's evolution from a bad administrator of his realm to an understanding of what a Christian monarch should be. In any cases, I shall also point out the interlacing of spiritual and moral ideas so that Arthur's political transformation can transcend the merely political arena. All these rhetorical,

thematic and structural devices convey Christian interpretations of the heroes' crises and developments. In the four texts, the spiritual/ethical significance of the protagonists' self-discovery cannot be detached from the political discourse centred on the good government of a country.

This chapter will be divided into four major sections, each of which will mainly deal with one of the four Scottish romances. First, I shall examine the text in which the spiritual fabric is most obviously delineated, Hary's *Wallace*. The second and third sections will be devoted to *The Bruce* and *Golagros and Gawane*. These two texts can be considered to have a less overtly allegorical structure. Yet, it will be argued that both Bruce and Arthur need to undergo a spiritual regeneration. Finally, Arthur's progression in *Lancelot of the Laik* will be discussed. In this chapter, Joinville's *Vie de Saint Louis* (1309), Philippe de Mézières' *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* (*c.* 1389) and John the Minstrel's *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* (*c.* 1226) will be employed sporadically as paradigmatic examples of the French and the Anglo-Norman traditions in comparison to the Scottish historical romances. The Scottish composition will be related to more general philosophical and religious texts — such as the Scottish *Saints' Lives* — and issues, which may have influenced the authors in their construction of the hero's development.

***The Wallace's* Allegorical Framework**

Hary deploys the allegorical conventions of the time in which dream visions and prophecies adumbrate the spiritual orchestration of *The Wallace*. Wallace's evolution from a knight of low rank to the Guardian and liberator of Scotland goes beyond purely heroic action. He emerges as a martyr of the national cause and is finally conducted to heaven. To complement this allegorical structure, a mythical/divine rearranging of events is applied to Hary's disposition of the romance. As Jack and

McDiarmid argue, historical events such as the Battle of Stirling Bridge and that of Falkirk are rearranged to conform to a Christian patterning of the romance. (McDiarmid [ed] 1968: I. lxxviii; Jack 2001: 46)

The hero's life is also reshaped in a manner in which the religious/divine elements are central to his development. Hary's re-structuring of events accords with Geoffrey of Vinsauf's notion of reordering the material:

> neither transposition of order should cause impropriety, but rather each part should take the other's fittingly, without strife, yielding to the other freely and pleasantly. Expert art inverts matters so as not to pervert them; it displaces material so as to place it better thereby. (*Poetria Nova*, ll. 93-99)

By doing so, Hary creates a defined allegorical framework to his romance. When Wallace is imprisoned in Ayr and about to be executed, he becomes completely aware of the importance of his *avanture*, an almost sacred enterprise to set Scotland free:

> All worthi Scottis, all-michty god thow leid,
> Sen I no mor in wyage may 3ou speid.
> In presoune heir me worthis to myscheyff.
> Sely Scotland, that of help has gret neide,
> The nacioune all standis in a felloun dreid.
> Off warldlynes all thus I tak my leiff.
> Off thir paynys god lat 3ou neuir preiff,
> Thocht I for wo all out off witt suld weid!
> Now othir gyft I may none to 3ou gyff."
>
> (II. 198-206)

As Jack argues, when the narrator substitutes the nine-line stanza of Chaucer's *Compleynt of Mars* for his customary couplets, the text offers passages of remarkable

emotion (Jack 2001: 45). In this concrete instance, the structural change emphasises all the nuances of the hero's passion. Wallace's "compleynt" captures the dramatic agitation of this moment of national and self-realisation.

Allegorically, Wallace's personal vendetta pushes forward and intermingles with the country's imperative necessities.[167] His face-to-face combats and sporadic skirmishes are allegorically redefined and relocated in the context of Scotland's struggle for emancipation. He comes to understand that he is the Elect. The fact that his epiphany coincides with his symbolic paralysis — he is imprisoned and seriously injured — intensifies the hero's tragedy. The notion of Wallace's later martyrdom is anticipated in this passage; thus the transcendence of addressing God directly as the one to lead and liberate his fellow compatriots. The national cause and the fight for freedom are seconded by the Lord and will be elevated to the domain of allegory. Wallace is thought to be dead: "[...] thai presumyt he suld be werray ded" (II. 252) and his body is washed: "His body wousche quhill filth was of him past" (II. 267). William Wallace is constructed as a Christ-like figure with his passion, and resurrection. At the same time, his symbolic death as a man leads to his rebirth as the legendary liberator of Scotland. Therefore, Christological symbolism is deployed to establish Wallace's absolute status as champion of Scotland's liberty. The political significance of the romance is transferred into the field of religious iconography. This transcends the literal world through an allegorical reconstruction of both Wallace and his fight, which, by the end of the romance, will lead the hero to the territory of anagogy with his ultimate entry into heaven.

A common element in the divine, historical patterning employed by Hary is prophecy. When Wallace is thought dead, the visionary figure of Thomas of Erceldoune asserts that Wallace is still alive and that he will liberate the country:

[167] In Book VI, for instance, when Wallace's wife is killed, not only does Wallace take revenge on his spouse's murderer, but he also expels the English from Lanark. The national and the personal struggle become an inseparable unity.

[...] "Forsuth, or he deces,
Mony thousand in feild sall mak thar end.
Off this regioune he sall the Sothroun send,
And Scotland thris he sall bryng to the pes.
So gud off hand agayne sall neuir be kend."

(II. 346-50)

Wallace's status as the Elect is permeated by the authoritative power of the pseudo-mythical Thomas. The choice of Thomas is not gratuitous in this context. The classical *auctoritas* is supplanted by the contemporary and Scottish authority of Thomas. The visionary foretelling of the Scottish struggle is nationalised through the person most likely to play such a role, a Scottish soothsayer. The concepts of allegory, Scottishness and nation cannot be dissociated in Hary's discourse. This prophecy parallels and strengthens the previous one on the English side: "Als Inglis clerkis in prophecys thai fand / How a Wallace suld putt thame of Scotland" (I. 351-52). If this first prophetic allusion to Wallace may have gone unnoticed amongst the audience, Thomas' prophecy return to emphasise the point while structuring the allegorical dimension of the romance.

In Joinville's *Vie de Saint Louis*, the military cause and God's intervention also intermingle. Although the national struggle of Hary's *Wallace* is absent from the *Vie*, the religious fight against the heathen and, in fact, the title of the work itself (a *vita* of a saint) justifies the presence of divine visions more overtly. A prince who had been lost during three months returns to the Christian camp and informs King Louis that he has seen God who told him that:

"Tu en iras a ton roy, et li diras que tu m'a veu, qui suis Sire du ciel et de la terre, et li diras que il me rende graces de la victoire que je li ai donnee

> sus prestre Jehan et sur sa gent. Et li diras encore, de par moy, que je li donne poissance de mettre en sa subjection toute la terre." (ch. 483)

Despite the obvious thematic differences between *The Wallace* and *La Vie de Saint Louis*, the deployment of visions implies the same *intentio auctoris*. The rightfulness of the causes is, in each case, confirmed by God's direct intervention and support at the same time as politically the Lord also vindicates a particular way of action. In the case of Wallace, extreme violence to liberate the land is validated whereas Louis' invasion of a foreign territory is similarly endorsed, too. In both texts, then, divine power and authority legitimise political or military procedures.

In *The Wallace*, after the prophetic *visio* which reveal that Wallace is the Elect, there is no further learning process or spiritual progression. The hero acts as a mature and conscientious character up to his death. The text functions in accord with a total allegorical structure:

> All things rest upon the first foundation but are not fitted to it in every way. As to the latter foundation everything else rests upon it and is fitted to it. The first one carries the superstructure and underlines the superstructure. The second one carries the superstructure and is not only under the superstructure but part of it. The foundation which is under the earth we have said stands for history, and the superstructure which is built uponit we have said suggests allegory. (*Didascalicon* Book VI. iv)

Within this allegorical fabric, Wallace can be regarded as a *puer senex*, a figure more typical of a legend or a *vita* than of romance.[168]

Regarding the French *vita* of Saint Catherine, for example, Calin argues in favour of this static, immutable representation of the main character:

[168] Although the origin of this literary figure is late Antiquity, Curtius claims that "it is the more significant, then, that the Bible had something corresponding to show." (Curtius 1990: 99)

> Despite her womanhood, Catherine acts like a man; she conquers clerks as a clerk, dominating them and the spectators by her beauty and her goodness but, even more, by her power of logic, quick wit, and agile tongue. As much as any figure of literature, she partakes of the topos of *puella senex*, a woman with the beauty of a young girl and the wisdom of a sage. (Calin 1994: 104-05)

Hary redefines the saintly characterisation of a *puer/puella senex* in the context of romance. He is the young warrior and leader of the Scottish cause at the same time as his acts are governed by the archetypal wisdom of an old clerk. His sufferings are those of a martyr. The saintly type, such as that of Catherine, is applied to Wallace and more generically to romance.

These thematic and structural interchanges between romances and saints' legends were common in the late Middle Ages. Gerould remarks that "all through the period of their popularity, from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, the reciprocal relation of the two types, verse romance and verse legend, were intimate, and their effects on one another important" (Gerould 1916: 134). Through this analogy, the spiritual attributes of a saint are symbolically transferred to Wallace. As opposed to the archetypal heroes of the genre, Wallace's personality does not evolve through a learning process. Instead, the *makar* creates different narrative strategies parallel to those of saints' legends and dream visions to provide the reader/hearer with spiritual insights into Wallace. His evolution, therefore, is not through a typical set of tests which lead to maturity but through the distinct stages of religious revelation.

His role as the Elect is reaffirmed at the beginning of Book VII with a vision of Saint Andrew and Virgin Mary. The saint patron of Scotland gives him a sword:

> "I am," he said, "in wiage chargit with the;"
>
> A suerd him gaiff off burly burnist steill.

"Gud sone," he said, "this brand thou sall bruk weill."

Off topaston him thocht the plumat was,

Baith hilt and hand all gliterand lik the glas.

"Der sone," he said, "we tary her to lang.

Thow sall go se quhar wrocht is mekill wrang."

(VII. 74-80)

Then, after the "[...] Inglismen tuk trewis with Wallace" (VII. 2), it is Saint Andrew himself who provides the hero with a sword to continue the war. At this point the religious and the political discourse intermingle. Politically, the *nationalisation* of the knight's guides is palpable once again: first, Thomas of Erceldoune revealed his vision of Wallace as a liberator, now Scotland's patron saint will complement and amplify Thomas' previous intervention.

Religiously, the first words of the passage point to different levels of meaning. These layers accord with the allegorical approach to texts put into practice in the Middle Ages, deriving from exegesis. First of all, the symbolism of the sword gives the reader/listener a range of different interpretations. The sword was a symbol of justice and of the cross. According to Llull:

> A cavayler és donada espaa, qui és feyta en semblança de creu, a ssignifficar que enaxí con nostro senyor Jesucrist vensé en la creu la mort en la qual érem caüts per lo peccat de nostro pare Adam, enaxí cavayler deu venscre e destruir los enamics de la creu ab l'espaa. E cor l'espaa és taylant de cada part, e cavaylaria és per mantenir justícia e justícia és donar a cascun son dret, per aysò l'espaa del cavayler significa que lo cavayler ab l'espaa mantengua cavayleria e justícia. (Llull 1988: 201)[169]

[169] In Haye's translation: "And, first and formast, thare is to the knycht gevin a suerd with a crossit hilt, that signifyis that rycht as oure lord Jhesus Crist vencust in the croce the iymy of mannis lygnage, to the quhilk he was dempt throu the syn of Adam, oure first fader, that rycht sa suld a knycht vencuse the fais of the Croce throu the suerd. For the suerd is ordanyt to do justice with; and tharfore is it maid

At an ethical/political level, Wallace must take on responsibility for restoring justice in Scotland by the expulsion of the English: war is justified again. At a spiritual level, the symbolism of the sword sublimates Wallace's *avanture* and its quasi-sacred significance. Biblical intertextuality also transcends the holy nature of the vision: the precious gem with which the weapon is forged, topaz, symbolically alludes to one of the foundations of the wall of New Jerusalem (*Rev.* 21.20), which also "gliterand lik the glas." (*Rev.* 21.11; 21.18; 21.21)

The literary motif of the hero's sword, so variously employed in epic and romance literature, is mythologised in *The Wallace*. While swords such as Arthur's Excalibur or the Cid's Tizona were used as literary elements which highlighted the *proeza* of their owners, the importance of Wallace's newly acquired weapon operates both morally/politically and spiritually. It is the instrument of quasi-sacred justice to liberate Scotland.[170]

Subsequently, Saint Andrew leads Wallace to a mountain, which is symbolically connected with the "knawledge [...] off wrang [and] [...] rycht" (VII. 126). Again the biblical reference to *Rev.* 21 is present. St John writes that "[...] he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me a great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God" (*Rev.* 21.20). In *The Wallace*, the hero sees events from past and present Scotland. After that revelation, he progresses to the next stage of the allegorical dream. The patron saint of Scotland conducts the hero to the Virgin Mary, who will be Wallace's guide:

> "Welcum," scho said. "I cheis the as my luff.
>
> Thow art grantyt be the gret god abuff

with twa egeis, in takenyng that he suld manetene and defend bathe temporalitee and spiritualitee with the double scherand suerd." (Haye 1901-1914: II. 44)

[170] Jack also suggests that "the gift of a sword marks his [Wallace's] new position as Scotland's Governor." (Jack 2001: 52)

Till help pepill that sufferis mekill wrang."

(VII. 95-97)

The image of Wallace as a Christ-like figure takes on further import as Virgin Mary explicitly asserts his divine designation. The saintly authority contradicts the human dictates, which are by definition imperfect. Her words reveal the wrongness of the Anglo-Scottish peace, while the *true* Scots are enduring the English tyranny.

While the intervention of Saint Andrew synthesised political reality and allegorical significance, Mary elevates Wallace's *avanture* to the realm of anagogy. As a Christ-like incarnation, his mission will typologically bring to the audience's mind Jesus Christ's sacrificial death to save humankind. Mary's subsequent oration will accentuate this anagogical simile:

This rycht regioun thow mon redeme it all.
Thi last reward in erd sall be bot small.
Let nocht tharfor tak redres off this mys,
To thi reward thou sall haiff lestand blys."

(VII. 101-04)

In this new reminder of his duty, Hary deploys the verb "redeme" instead of "liberate" or "fight." The specific use of this word is deliberate: in Middle Scots, it can either mean "to recover or regain by force" or "to return (to grace)" (*Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* VII. 1931-2002: 165-66).[171] The religious connotations of the term reinforce the quasi-sacred enterprise of the hero and evoke Jesus Christ's redemption of the world through death. Constant suffering and painful torture as a consequence of carrying out his *avanture* will be recompensed in heaven with eternal *beatitudo*. The dream vision evolves from moral/ethical issues about Scotland to spiritual and

[171] Precisely, in the *Dictionary*, the example for this second meaning is also taken from *The Wallace* (X. 1054).

anagogical revelations, which re-codify the liberation of the nation in the parameters of divinity.

The death of the hero follows the patterning of saints' legends and the passion of Christ. When Wallace returns to Scotland in book XII, like Judas, the arch Scottish traitor Sir John Menteth sells him to the English. Hary refuses to relate the knight's torture:

> Bot Wallace end in warld was displesans,
>
> Tharoff I ces and puttis it nocht in rym.
>
> (XII. 1230-31)

Hary's refusal to elaborate on this is explained in terms of the moral abhorrence at English cruelty rather than historical ignorance or rhetorical inadequacy. The dramatic effect is poignant: silence will move the audience to feel sympathy and pity for Wallace. They are left to imagine the viciousness of their foes' actions. This rhetorical device is employed in other occasions: "the poet deliberately *avoids* depicting violence. In such moments the Scots are usually the victims. [...] The "inability" topos thus spares the reader useless grief" (Goldstein 1993: 227-28). It is a little striking, however, that on his image of the hero as saint, Hary decides not to describe one of the essential elements of a typical saint's *vita*, that of the torture of the saint. His saintly construction will be accomplished otherwise.

The sense of bewilderment and defeat will not last much longer:

> Scotland may thank the blyssyt, happy tym
>
> At he was born, be prynsuall poyntis two.
>
> This is the first, or that we forthyr go,
>
> Scotland he fred and brocht it off thrillage;
>
> And now in hewin he has his heretage,

As It prewyt be gud experians.

(XII. 1232-37)

Wallace's sufferings and death are turned into joyful praise of his achievements. National freedom and anagogy interlace at the ultimate moment of victory over momentary earthly defeat. This is a recurrent structural pattern in saints' lives, in which the saint's sorrow occasioned by torture and death is immediately followed by his real *victory* in the realm of the sacred.

In the Scottish version of the life of Saint Lawrence, when the Romans are roasting the martyr, he utters the following words:

[...] "now þu ma se
þat þi fel fyre refreschis me,
and to þe ay-lestand payne
It sal mynistere, nocht to layne;
fore god wat I nyt hyme nocht,
accusit in word na in thocht,
& now one þe rost-yrne layd
I ȝeld hyme thank." [...]

("Laurentius," ll. 471-78)

Even during his terrible punishment, Lawrence's faith in God prevents him from extreme suffering. God's intervention signifies the superior value of the Christian creed in diametric contraposition to the false Roman gods. The definitive victory of the saint comes with death:

"lord Ihesu, ay lowyt mot þu be,
fore I ame worthy to haf entre
with þe ȝatis of þi blyse,"

& ȝauld þe srpyt sayand þus.

(ll. 493-96)

Hary's structural parallelism testifies that Wallace's final stage of his life is designed according to a saints' life, which, at the same time, was typologically based on that of Christ. Wallace incarnates the perfect representation of an agon, a saint who is defeated physically, but triumphs spiritually. As Jack points out, the work comes to an end with the anagogical death of Wallace, pointing to mysteries of divine truth. It also projects "an image of [...] absolute harmony which reconciles contingent discords within the harmony of spheres." (Jack 2001: 51)

Wallace's entrance into heaven is confirmed by another vision in which a dead priest is waiting to enter paradise because Wallace is given priority over him. The priest has to explain to his brother and, by implication, to the audience of the poem, why such "a gret slaar of men" (XII. 1278) precedes a pious member of the clergy:

"He is Wallace, defendour off Scotland,
For rychtwys wer that he tuk apon hand.
Thar rychtwysnes is lowyt our the lawe,
Tharfor in hewyn he sall that honour hawe."

(XII. 1285-88)

As in the knight's conversation with Mary, the imperfection of human law is accentuated. The divinely designated Wallace and his slaughter are justified owing to Scotland's right to freedom. The mysterious paradigms of divinity are inseparable from the nation's priorities in Hary's ideological disposition of the romance.

This divine patterning of *The Wallace* also functions through the thematic opposition between bodily desires and spirit, which was a typical theme developed in the literature of the late Middle Ages.[172] By the loss of his terrestrial body, Wallace

[172] A classical example of this is in Inferno V in Dante's *Divina Commedia*:
Intensi ch'a così fatto tormento
enno dannati i peccator carnali,

also gets rid of his human appetites. Earthly life is left behind and spiritual truth is embraced. The ending corroborates this definitive progression from the mutable human world to God's eternal *beatitudo*:

> I will nocht tell how he dewydyt was
>
> In v parties and ordand for to pas.
>
> Bot thus his spreyt be liklynes was weill.
>
> (XII. 1407-09)

Similarly, in the case of Saint Lawrence (l. 496), as a paradigmatic example of a *vita*, the "spryt / spreyt," as the purest substance of a pious being, ascends into heaven. Hary concludes with the typology which he has maintained all through the poem with Wallace as a Christ-like or saint-like figure.

The King's Penitence and Redemption in *The Bruce*

Although *The Bruce* focuses on martial action, Barbour rearranges historical events so that a potentially allegorical interpretation is implied. This conforms to the King of Scots' obligatory atonement for the killing of Comyn in the Greyfriars' church. His spiritual learning will permit him to become the kind monarch required to "rwle and lede" his nation. To frame this allegorical structure completely, Barbour also constructs his hero's death within pious parameters.

> che la ragion sommettono al talento.
>
> (ll. 37-39)

In Scotland, William Dunbar's *Golden Targe* also explores this tension through a dream vision. Similarly, his older contemporary Robert Henryson debates the division between soul and human needs and its implications at the beginning of his fable "The Preaching of the Swallow:"

> Thairfor, our saull with sensualitie
> So fetterit is on presoun corporall,
> We may not cleirlie understand nor se
> God as He is, nor thingis celesiall;
> Our mirk and deidlie corps materiale
> Blindis the spirituall operatioun,
> Lyke as ane man wer bundin in presoun
>
> (st. 2)

According to Kliman, in *The Bruce* Barbour "develops an ideal of chivalry that is not the narrow ideal of war-chivalry, centred on personal fame. [...] The nation and desire for freedom are for him the motivating forces of this new transcendent chivalry" (Kliman 1973: 505). Kliman seems to imply that the concept of nation replaces (or is equivalent to) Christianity in Barbour's view of chivalry. It seems to me, however, that both concepts are inherent within the author's discourse. As expounded in the second chapter, chivalry, for Barbour, cannot be detached from its Christian origins. At the same time, the *makar* insists on the necessity of placing chivalry at the service of the national cause.

As a Christian knight, one of the protagonist's main goals would be to go on a crusade to defend the faith and recover the Holy Sepulchre. Nevertheless, Bruce cannot leave Scotland due to the Wars of Independence. As Schwend states, the King of Scots could never go on a crusade. Although he intended to do so, his war against the English forced him to stay in Scotland during his lifetime (Schwend 1986: 208). This unavoidable historical context of the romance would not allow Bruce to be represented participating in a fight against the heathen during his reign. Alternatively, Bruce's pilgrimage may be interpreted as an allegorical atonement before he can be regarded as the legitimate King of Scots. As pointed out by Aristotle, events can be rearranged so that an author can create different meanings:

> Even matters of chance seem most marvellous if there is some appearance of design in them; as for instance the statue of Mitys at Argos killed the author caused Mitys' death by falling down on him when a looker-on at a public spectacle; for incidents like that we think to be not without meaning. A plot, therefore, of this sort is necessarily finer than others. (Aristotle's *Art of Poetry*, ch. 9)

Thus, while an allegorical reading of *The Bruce* after the killing of Comyn might not be obvious at first sight,[173] I shall argue that the author, as a clergyman, cannot allow Bruce to become the King of Scots without being punished and redeemed for such a sin. Barbour must negotiate between the representations of Bruce as the national Scottish leader and the perfect Christian monarch.

Barbour's university education also reveals something about his philosophical and theological background. The University of Paris was famous for its strongly Aristotelian teaching. As Jack suggests, "if Barbour is indeed working within the Aristotelian-Christian tradition," the framework of the text should be "typologically patterned in order to highlight the clear signing system which translates mystery into history" (Jack 2000: 32-33). Although he did not develop this idea, Snell was probably the first scholar to suggest a possible allegorical interpretation of some passages in *The Bruce*: "it is his [Barbour's] melancholy task to follow the champion of Scotland over moor and mountain, hunted by John of Lorne and his sleuthhound and in hourly peril of ignominious arrest" (Snell 1899: 57). Snell suggests that these painful contrarieties could be interpreted as an allegorical punishment for killing Comyn.

The *makar* creates at least three basic layers of interpretation: first, the literal (or historical) level, in which historical facts are explained having a meaning on their own; second, the ethical/political level, which was examined in the first chapter; and third, the allegorical level, in which the same deeds may be reinterpreted as Bruce's penitence and redemption. As Hugh of St Victor claims, "the foundation and principle of sacred learning [...] is history, from which, like honey from the

[173] Watt claims that "Barbour pays surprisingly little attention to Robert I's sacrilegious murder of Comyn in a church" (Watt 1994: 100). Yet, Hugh of St Victor, albeit referring to Divine Scripture, argues that behind the narrative of history, the truth of allegory, as divine learning and truth, is to be found:

> You have in history the means through which to admire God's deeds, in allegory the means through which to believe his mysteries, in morality the means through which to imitate his perfection. (*Didascalicon,* VI.iii)

honeycomb, the truth of allegory is extracted" (*Didascalicon,* VI.iii). Accordingly, Barbour arranges historical events before Bannockburn in a manner within a potentially allegorical framework. Consequently, the hardships Bruce must confront may be interpreted as a Christian penitence which will help him to become a better person, in general, and a better monarch, in particular.

Just after Comyn's death at the altar, the *makar* hastens to tell (and acknowledge) that:

> Nocht-for-yi ȝeit sum men sayis
> At yat debat fell oyer-ways,
> Bot quhat-sa-euyr maid ye debate
> Yar-throuch he [Comyn] deyt weill I wat
> He mysdyd yar gretly but wer
> Yat gave no gyrth to ye awter,
> Yarfor sa hard myscheiff him fell
> Yat ik herd neuer in romanys tell
> Off man sa hard frayit as wes he
> Yat efterwart com to sic bounte.
>
> (II. 39-48)

Barbour severely condemns Bruce's action. This attitude is very difficult to find in any other romance of the time. The author refuses to make use of an idealised portrayal typical of the romance hero by accusing him of a terrible sin. Neither does he make any concession to any other version of the story which may exonerate the hero or, at least, soften his sin. "The rhythm of the whole might be described as a wheel of fortune, a favorite paradigm in the Middle Ages. The hero begins from the lowest point, having murdered Comyn" (Kliman 1977: 112). It is plausible to assume

that Barbour, the Archdeacon of Aberdeen, equates the "hard myscheiff"[174] with the tortuous path Bruce must follow towards penitence and redemption.[175] Notwithstanding the hardness of Barbour's accusation, the author from his pro-Bruce and Stewart discourse cannot help foretelling Bruce's final success redemption by concluding that he finally "com to sic bounte." As well as the obvious chivalric meaning of "bounte," Barbour seems to imply Bruce's redemption.

After Barbour's severe criticism of the King of Scots, the following books relate the hero's sufferings and exile. The constructions of these episodes give the reader certain clues to be interpreted as Robert I's penance. The author selects and reorganises historical events in a way in which a possible allegorical interpretation — including intertextual biblical allusions — is bestowed on them.[176] This is the first illustration of this:

> And so feile fayis about him wer
> Yat all ye countre yaim werrayit.
> So hard anoy yaim yan assayit
> Off hunger could with schowris snell
> Yat nane yat levys can weill it tell.
> Ye king saw how his folk wes stad
> And quhat anoyis yat yai had,
> And saw wynter wes cummand ner,
> And yat he mycht on na maner
> Dre in ye hillys ye cauld lying

[174] Here, "hard myscheiff" must be interpreted as "evil" with all its chivalric and religious connotations.

[175] Ebin claims that "the idea of a hard struggle before success as a result of Bruce's sin is reiterated throughout the first section of the narrative becoming almost a leit-motif to the action" (Ebin 1971-72: 231). In spite of this statement, he does not treat these incidents allegorically, but just as a way to "rationalize the action."

[176] At a rhetorical level, Kliman defines this rearrangement of events as "the rhythm of incidents," describing "the relationship between incidents that occur not through cause and effect, but through poetic logic." (Kliman 1977: 109)

Na ye land nychtis waking.

(III. 374-384)

This historical event is employed by the poet to emphasise the setbacks of their escape, which are centred on the figure of Robert Bruce. At the literal/historical level, the author gives a clear, descriptive account of King Robert's defeat at Methven and its consequences. Kliman claims that Barbour does not explain Bruce's defeat at Methven as a consequence of the killing of Comyn" (Kliman 1973: 506). Nonetheless, should the trained medieval audience notice the *makar's* harsh condemnation of Comyn's death, they would expect some kind of punishment and regeneration of Bruce. The newly crowned monarch is chased by his enemies, facing hunger, rain and the cold Scottish winter. Like his men, he cannot sleep at night and is not safe on the hills. This passage can be interpreted as the first stage of his penitence.

Likewise, the poet's description of Bruce and his party's exile to the island is represented in such a way that there is an implicit invitation for the audience to analyse the meaning of these lines in allegorical terms:

Ye schippys our ye wawys slayd
For wynd at poynt blawand yai had,
Bot nocht-for-yi quha had yar bene
A gret stertling he mycht haiff seyne
Off schippys, for quhilum sum wald be
Rycht on ye wawys as on mounte,
And sum wald slyd fra heycht to law
Rycht as yai doune till hell wald draw,
Syne on ye waw stert sodanly,
And oyer schippys yat war yarby

Deliuerly drew to ye depe.

(III. 701-11)

At a purely literal level, it is not complicated to consider that sailors may have tremendous difficulties in piloting a boat at sea in Northern Scotland. At the same time, however, other major considerations can be observed. Firstly, intertextual reference to the Bible is observed: in Psalm 107, a psalm of thanksgiving for being saved from dangerous situations, there is an allusion to God lifting and calming the waves, whose allegorical meaning and textual composition have inescapable correspondences to this passage in *The Bruce*.[177] This reminds the audience of the frailty of human existence and the mutability of this world.

Secondly, the symbolic force of four elements indicates that an allegorical interpretation can be inferred.[178] Although Bruce is certainly not set adrift, the action being set on the sea suggests a recurrent *topos* in allegorical medieval literature, God's judgement by elements:

> Persons were often set adrift for one of the three reasons: when guilt could not be conclusively determined by human investigation, when men wished to combine severity with some possibility of mercy, or when... society wished to expel an unwanted person from its midst. The Christian instances assume that God is the sole arbiter of guilt and innocence, and

[177] "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven." (Ps. 107.23-30)

[178] For example, it is typical of saint's legends for the holy figures to work elemental miracles. In the Scottish *Vita Columbae, c.* 695 (Penguin, 1995), for example, St Adomnán of Iona relates several incidents in which miracles and the elements are connected: in Book II ch. viii, a young man who died in the Irish River Boyne was under the waters for twenty days. However, when his dead body is rescued, all the documents he carried with him were "ruined and rotten, except a page, which St Columba had written out with his own hand." Also in Book III, in ch. xxxix, when some sailors did not allow Librán to embark in their ship, the wind "swung round against the boat." It is not until they accepted him on board that "the wind which had been blowing against them veered round, and they had a fair voyage to Britain."

the sea merely an instrument through which He expresses His judgement.

(Kolve 1984: 326)

This manner of judging people was very popular among medieval authors of pious texts: Chaucer and the Gawain-Pearl poet, both English contemporaries of Barbour, employed this *topos*. The four elements function as the allies of *Fortuna*, which is the mutable, contingent face of Divine Providence's mysterious ways. In Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*, for example, after the killing of all the Christians in Syria:

> [...] Custance han they take anon, foot-hoot,
> And in a ship steerelees, God woot,
> They han hir set, and bidde hire lerne saille
> Out of Surrye agaynward to Ytaille
> A certein tresor that she thider ladde,
> And, sooth to seyn, vitaille greet plentee
> They han hire yeven, and clothes eek she hadde,
> And forth she sailleth in the salte see.
> O my Custance, ful of benignitee,
> O Emperoures younge doghter deere,
> He that is lord of Fortune be thy steere!
>
> (ll. 438-48)

Chaucer, in one of the most profoundly Christian stories of *The Canterbury Tales*, employs the *topos* of setting someone adrift on her/his own.[179] In this case, the English poet's use of this device highlights both the saintly figure of Custance and her *fortitudo* (constancy is a virtue closely associated with *fortitudo* in the medieval tradition).[180] Similarly, it is also remarkable that the narrator extols her goodness

[179] Although the sultan's mother intention is to kill Custance, the Christian context of the *Tale* also allows for God's intervention and judgement by the elements.

[180] For a detailed analysis of the connection between constancy and *fortitudo* in the *Man of Law's Tale*, see Kolve. (1984: 304)

(benignitee) and immediately afterwards God is invoked to steer the boat (l. 448). The Gawain-Pearl poet makes use of almost the same expression in *Cleanness* in order to explain why Noah's Arch did not sink:

> Nyff oure Lorde hade ben her lodesmon, hem had lumpen harde.
>
> (l. 424)

In pious texts, the reader is bound to find numerous references to the Bible and to the religious iconography of the time. The allegorical and moral meaning of what is being heard/read is denoted. Nevertheless, in a historical romance such as *The Bruce,* the thematic and stylistic fabric of the work itself very much depends on the *roman courtois* and epic literature under the appearance of historical factuality devoid of supernatural events.[181] The religious subtext of the narrative cannot be so obvious, should the author want to stick to the conventions of the genres within which he is working. For this reason, the possible allegorical interpretation of some passages is insinuated rather than overly conveyed. The natural forces which Bruce and his men have to fight can be explained as God's judgement by elements for Bruce to atone for his sin. At the same time, within this possible allegorical framework, it represents another stage in Bruce's painful penitence.

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[181] Significantly, the only supernatural element in *The Bruce* is rapidly underplayed by the author. In Book IV, Bruce comes back to the mainland after his *exile* in the outer Scottish islands. A woman, his hostess (she is not even described as a witch or a sorceress), tells Bruce about a prophecy announcing his great future as the King of Scots (IV. 638-661). Bruce's reaction leaves no room for ambiguity:

> Ye king yat herd all hyr carping
> Thankit hyr in mekill thing,
> For scho confort him sumdeill,
> Ye-quheyir he trowyt nocht full weill
> Hyr spek, for he had gret ferly
> How scho suld wyt it sekyrly
>
> (IV. 668-673)

The only significance attached to the prophecy is that of comforting the king. Barbour emphasises this point: the last two lines of the quotation are the narrator's voice and judgement, not the king's. This scepticism underlines the Christian disapproval of the pagan implications of fore-knowledge from someone other than God.

In his nineteenth-century edition of *The Bruce*, Jamieson also highlights Barbour's dismissal of the supernatural by referring to St. Fillan:

> Barbour had too much good sense to take any notice of the signal aid that the king was said to receive from St. Fillan, in the decisive battle. As far as I can find, the pretended miracle rests on the testimony of Boece. (Jamieson [ed] 1869: 485)

After Bruce's exile in the islands, he and his followers return to the mainland when the former's penitence has been almost completed. The beginning of Book V is introduced with an idealised representation of spring, in which "[...] ye nychtyngale / Begouth rycht sariely to syng / Swete notis and sownys ser" / [...] / "And ye treis begouth to ma / Burgeans and brycht blomys alsua" (V. 1-13). As Duncan reminds us, in romances the harmonising singing of birds in a springlike *locus amoenus* serves to indicate "an abrupt change of action" (Duncan 1997: 190). The use of this *topos* in *The Bruce* denotes that the king's fate is about to change, now that he is coming back to the mainland.[182] While it cannot be conclusively claimed that the sovereign's growth in spiritual maturity will finally mean that he is absolved for the murder at the Greyfriars' Church, it does imply that he is at a later stage of his penitence and sufferings.

Indeed, not until Book IX can Robert Bruce's penitence be said to finish allegorically:

> And yar him [Bruce] tuk sik a seknes
> Yat put him to full hard distres.
> He forbar bath drink & mete,
> His men ne medicyne couth get
> Yat euer mycht to ye king awaile,
> Hys force gan him halyly faile

[182] The description, idealised as it is, tells us that the change of action will be positive for the hero's interests. Another *topos* closely connected with this one is when an idealised spring landscape turns out to be a description of winter in springtime. This presupposes that the main character is going to confront a very difficult situation. A good illustration of this is the beginning of Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid*:

> Ane doolie sessoun to ane cairfull dyte
> Suld correspond and be equivalent:
> Richt sa it wes quhen I began to wryte
> This tragedie; the wedder richt fervent,
> Quhen Aries, in middis of the Lent,
> Schouris of haill gart fra the north discend,
> That scantlie fra the cauld I micht defend
> (st. 1)

Yat he mycht noyer rid na ga.

(IX. 35-41)

This terrible sickness affecting the king may suggest an allegorical interpretation. That he had to stop both drinking and eating (IX. 38) is an obvious symbol of atonement, an allegory of what monks and clergymen, in general, literally did as penitence. After this illness, Bruce finally awakes to his *vita nuova* to be the king Scotland needs a short time before the decisive battle of Bannockburn. After his long penitence and redemption, Robert Bruce evolves from the impulsive young king to the mature monarch who will govern Scotland with a perfect balance between *justice* and *mercy*. Therefore, the possible allegorical meaning of these passages is much more consistent when it is examined as a unity rather than as unrelated individual units. Although she makes reference to Barbour's work as a whole, Kliman's words could be also applied to this allegorical structure: "the rhythm of the whole which is built up through the rhythm of incidents would not be apparent if it were not for the work's unity." (Kliman 1977: 114)

The death of the main character conveys an allegorical parallel reading of the action, leading to his salvation after a warrior's life. Prior to death, however, because of the political milieu into which the work is integrated, the already ill hero must ensure the accomplishment of his regal duties. This rounds out his image completely. In Book XX, King Robert finally signs a peace with England:

Qhuen men yir thingis for-spokyn had
And with selis and athis maid
Festnyng off frendschip and of pes
Yat neuer for na chaunc suld ces,

(XX. 55-58)

At last, historically, Robert I's royalty and the Scottish national freedom are recognised by the enemy: Bruce's victory is definitive. Allegorically, the harmony among the spheres is finally recovered through "pes." The reader is symbolically brought back to the idealised times of Alexander III, mentioned at the beginning of work. This represents the perfection of a circular structure.[183] This scene is followed by the marriage and coronation of Bruce's son, which within the allegorical framework and limits of the poem secure the continuation of this ideal state of things after Bruce's death (although we know that historically this was not so).

This is an archetypal death for monarchs or rulers in chronicles and historical literature of the late Middle Ages. In French literature, for example, in Joinville's *Vie de Saint Louis*, when in Tunis, Louis IX feels that death is approaching, the first thing he does is to settle his succession. He calls his son and gives him advice on good kingship:

> "Biau filz, la premiere chose que je t'enseigne si est que tu mettes ton cuer en amer Dieu. Car sanz ce, nulz ne peut estre sauvé. [...] Se Dieu t'envoie perversité, si le reçoif en patience et en rent graces a Nostre Seigneur, et pense que tu l'as deservi, et que il te tournera tout a preu." (ch. 740-41)

Significantly, as in the case of Amytans' lesson to Arthur in *Lancelot of the Laik*, the counselling commences not with an allusion to political tactics or policies but to the humility and devotion owed to God. Only through being a good Christian, can someone become a good monarch. As an old wise man who has learnt from experience, the king's second piece of advice parallels the teachings of Lady Philosophy in Boethius' *De Consolatione*. Without explicitly referring to fortune and

[183] Alexander's idealised reign is intimately connected with good leadership and kingship, which is regained through Bruce and his successors:

> Qwhen Alexander ye king wes deid
> Yat Scotland haid to steyr & leid,
> (I. 37-38)

Divine Providence, Louis instructs his son in how to act on adverse situations from a Christian perspective. In the *Vie*, then, the lines before the hero's death extol the narrative's main conception, the sanctity of Louis IX, even more.

In the Anglo-Norman literature, in the *Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, at the acme of his military career (after expelling the French from England), Guillaume first solves the political problems of the kingdom and provides the young King with a suitable tutor. When he knows he has arranged everything in life, he says:

> "Si fereit bien que j'en pensasse,
> & oiant vos me dilivrasse
> De totes choses terrïenes,
> E pensasse as celestïenes,
> Car li bosoigz en sereit granz."
>
> (ll. 18131-35)

These lines signify the end of the historical account of knightly feats of arms. With his renunciation of earthly possessions, the beginning of what might be termed a hagiographic account of Guillaume's search for salvation begins. After confessing his intention to become a Templar,[184] in lines 18360-66, he dresses with a "mantel." He symbolically performs his vow of poverty by refusing the garments of a rich and powerful knight before being taken to Reading Abbey.[185] He will die on holy ground, which will ensure his passage to paradise. Subsequently, he says goodbye to his wife: "Bel'amie, or me besereiz, / Car ja mès nul jor nel ferez" (ll. 18369-70). In this way,

[184] "St. Bernard [...] saw in them [Templars] the ideal means of salvation for laymen who showed no aptitude for the traditional type of monastic life" (Lawrence 1984: 168). Therefore, this might be regarded as a perfect retirement for a knight seeking salvation.

[185] Interestingly, by becoming a monk (and almost a hermit), Guillaume approaches God on earth as much as he can — an idea which coincides with the line of thought of several medieval philosophers. In Ramon Llull's doctrines concerning the vow of poverty, for instance, the way to be closest to God in this world was by abandoning one's earthly possessions and becoming a hermit. In his prose romance *Llibre d'Evast e Blanquerna*, the main hero, Blanquerna, is elected Pope. Yet, he gives up the papacy to become a hermit, stating that a hermit is closer to God than His representative on Earth, the pope. Coincidentally, a few years afterwards, a real pope, Celestine V (the one placed by Dante in the vestibule of hell) renounced the papacy to become a hermit.

he also relinquishes his marriage. Through the metaphoric use of the last kiss, he also repudiates sex. Symbolically, he attains the last vow, that of chastity, to become a monk.

From then on, the three heroes' progression towards death follows a narratorial path dictated by Christian tradition, which establishes a saintly thematic structure. Thus, when Guillaume's illness get worse and worse, he "[...] ne pot mangier, / Ainz perdi tot beivre & mangier" (18445-46). The subsequent reaction of the people is characterised by signs of absolute desperation. The other narratives are also permeated by the vassals' devotion and desolation. In *The Bruce*,

> And fra his folk wist he wes ded
> Ye sorow rais fra steid to steid,
> Yar mycht men se men ryve yar har
> And comounly knychtis gret full sar
> And yar newffys oft samyn dryve
> And as woud men yar clathis ryve,
>
> (XX. 263-68)

These passages intensify the Christian insight of the heroes during their pious death processes.

The religious significance of the different texts is accomplished with the creation of an allegorical schema responding to Christian transcendence when the protagonists enter the realm of God. In the *Histoire*, the Abbot of Nutley asserts that "E Dex encor plus largement, / Le vos [Guillaume] rendra, j'en sui toz fis, / En la glorie de paradis" (ll. 18668-70). This asseveration is reinforced by John the Minstrel's use of a dream vision, whose iconographic and figurative significance was designed to attract the audience's interest. Just before dying, Guillaume has a revealing *visio* in which two

knights in white (the colour of the Order of the Temple and that of purity and Christian charity) drive him to heaven (ll. 18760-66).

Bruce's way to paradise is delineated in the shape of his symbolic participation in the Crusades[186] after his death — ideally, the best way in which a Christian knight can serve God. As a Christ-like figure again, by symbolically rising from the dead, the King of Scots consummates the holy enterprise of confronting the heathen. This intervention in the crusade, as well as guaranteeing him a place in heaven, parallels Edward's desertion of holy war in Book I. This follows the structural parameters of divinity:[187] "the temporality and devilish 'sleness' of the English king are thus counterpointed against the holy death and resurrective journey of his Scottish counterpart, when Douglas carries his heart on crusade" (Jack 2000: 34). Bruce accomplishes an allegorical return to origins in accordance with the mythological origins of Scotland. If it was Edward Bruce who first returned to Ireland, now it is Bruce's heart and Douglas which close the perfect circular narrative structure by going on a crusade to Spain.[188]

Intervention in à crusade is the best way in which a knight can serve God according to the mythological origins of chivalry:

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[186] Interestingly, this scene, more characteristic of a romance than of reality, seems to be historically supported:

> In the early years of the nineteenth century, when the Abbey Church of Dunfermline was being restored, the workmen came upon the remains of a splendid tomb in the spot which tradition assigned to the grave of Bruce. Within, amid the fragments of cloth of gold, lay the skeleton of a tall man, and the fact that the breastbone had been sawn through confirmed the poet's account of the removal of the king's heart. (Eyre-Todd [trans] 1996: 358 [note])

[187] Hugh of St Victor describes the correspondences between history and God's truth as follows: "Here is the whole of divinity, this is that spiritual structure which is raised on high, built, as it were, with as many courses of stones as it contains mysteries. You wish also to know the very bases themselves. The bases of the courses are the principles of the mysteries. See now, you have come to your study, you are about to construct the spiritual building. Already the foundations of history have been laid in you: it remains now that you found the bases of the superstructure." (*Didascalicon*, VI. iv)

[188] This mythical journey is highlighted by Jack and Rozendaal: "The Maccabees were the chosen biblical race. By linking the Scottish people with them, Barbour introduces the line of mythic history which traces back Scotland's history via a journey from the Holy Land, by way of Spain and Ireland, to their intended homeland. Fordun makes the same comparison." (Jack and Rozendaal [ed] 1997: 12 [note])

> Defallí caritat, leyaltat, justícia e veritat en lo món; començà enamistat, desleyaltat, injúria, falsetat; e per aysò fo error e torbament en lo poble de Déu, qui era creat per ço que Déus sie amat, conagut, honrat, servit e temut per home.
>
> Al començament, con fo en lo món vengut menypreament de justícia per minvament de caritat, covenc que justícia retornàs en son honrament per temor. E per aysò, de tot lo poble foren fets milanaris e de cascú .M. fo elet e triat .I. home pus amable, pus savi, pus leyal e pus fortz e ab pus noble coratge, ab més d'ensenyaments e de bons nodriments que tots los altres. (Llull 1988: 167)[189]

Thus, the Order of Chivalry was ideally founded to defend God and his teachings in the middle of chaos. Bruce wins his most important battle, that unifying knightly and religious responsibilities even after his death.

Similarly, in Joinville's *Vie de Saint Louis*, "quant le bon roy ot enseignié son filz monseigneur Phelippe" (ch. 755), he prepares for death:

> Aprés, se fist le saint roy coucher en un lit couvert de cendre, et mist ses mains sus sa poitrine. Et en regardant vers le ciel rendi a nostre Createur son esperit [...]. (ch. 757)

Christian imagery converges with Louis' representation of his death. The typical devotional positioning of saints' mortuary sculptures is adopted by the monarch. The reader cannot fail to make this typological connection between the king and a saint.

[189] In Haye's translation: "In the tyme that cheritee, leautee, justice, and veritee was failit in the warld, than began crueltee, unlautee, injure and falsete: and than was errour and distrublaunce in the warld; in the quhilk warld God had maid man to duell to trowe in him, serve him, honore him, love him, and dout him. Bot first quhen despising of justice come in the warld, and than was syk mysreugle and misgovernaunce in the warld amang the peple for fault of justice, that for to ger the reugle of gude governaunce cum agayn with force and drede of awe, the peple gert chese a man amang a thousand, the quhilk was maist wise, maist stark and sturdy, and best of governaunce, maist godlyke, and full of grete leautee, and of maist noblesse, maist curageus, and best techit in vertues." (Haye 1901-1914: II. 11)

In fact, this passage anticipates the conclusion of the story insofar as Joinville's *Vie* finalises with the canonisation of Louis IX:

> Aprés ce, par le pourchas du roy de France, et par le commandement l'apostelle, vint l'ercevesque de Roan et frere Jehan de Samoys, qui puis fu evesque, vindrent a Saint-Denis en France, et demourerent lonc-temps pour enquerre de la vie, des oeuvres, et des miracles du sainct roy. (ch. 760)

The perfect ending of Louis' life is the sanctification through which he is secured a place in heaven. The entire composition of the story advances in this direction culminating in glory after death, the accomplishment of *beatitudo*.

***Golagros and Gawane*: Arthur's Spiritual and Political Need for Regeneration**

The Arthurian romance, *Golagros and Gawane*, begins with Arthur going on a pilgrimage, which suggests that the King may undergo some kind of spiritual process of regeneration. As Jack affirms, Arthur's adventure is redefined in the context of a spiritual, and not simply chivalric, pilgrimage (Jack 1974-75: 5):

> In the tyme of Arthur, as trew men me tald,
> The King turnit on ane tyde towart Tuskane,
> Hym to seik ovr the sey, that saiklese was sald,
> The syre that sendis all seill, suthly to sane;
>
> (ll. 1-4)

This need for a *peregrinatio* re-codifies the subtext of the literal journey. In *Golagros and Gawane* the pilgrimage motif, which is absent from the original, becomes an important narrative point to the detriment of the chivalric and courtly concerns of the French prose. It also generates a series of expectations in the audience, who will look for signs building on an allegorical structure.

The fabulous retinue of the king with "Cumly kingis with croune / Of gold that was cleir" (ll. 12-13) and shining armour (ll. 20-22) can be interpreted in contrary ways. The most obvious one is the chivalric *topos* of a glorious army advancing in full array — its image being that of invincible power. Yet, in the more Christian framework of a *peregrinatio*, distinct spiritual questions are implied contextually: is there any reason why the display of riches and weapons is needed in an *a priori* pacific journey to a holy seat? In the context of this spiritual interpretation, Arthur and his court are made obscure by pride, the origin of all sins. The author ironically transfers the implicit pride of the *Chastel Orguellous* in the French original to the Arthurian world. Therefore, the attire and general attitude of Arthur and his retinue determine that the pilgrimage will only be completed as a physical journey. Spiritual blindness prevents the court from realising the true significance of their enterprise.

The hollowness is reaffirmed when Arthur wants to conquer Golagros' lands without any justifiable reason. Arthur's intentions and methods do not correspond to any chivalric feat of arms but to "his obsession with temporal power" since he "has twisted the concept of fealty to subserve his own lust for power" (Jack 1974-75: 12).[190] Golagros' castle excels in magnificence:

> Syne war thai war of ane wane, wrocht with ane wal,
> Reirdit on ane riche roche, beside ane riveir,
> With doubill dykis bedene drawin ovr all;
> Micht nane thame note with invy, nor nygh thame to neir.
> The land wes likand in large and lufsum to call;
> Propir schene schane the son, seymly and feir.
>
> (ll. 237-42)

[190] As previously explained, in the *First Continuation* the imprisonment of Gyflet fils Do justifies Arthur's attack on the Riche Soudoyer, a fact absent from *Golagros and Gawane*.

The perfection of the spot functions as an adaptation of the *locus amoenus* of classical and medieval literature to the seigniorial stronghold of chivalric romances. Furthermore, its sudden appearance in the middle of the forest suggests an element of the Other World. Both the *locus amoenus* and the supernatural conventionally imply that the romance hero will have to undergo a test or a series of tests. Arthur's thirst for power will be challenged not in the physical pilgrimage but in Golagros' territories.

The journey to the Holy Land loses all its significance for Arthur:

> The Roy rial raid withoutin resting,
> And socht to the cieté of Criste, ovr the salt flude.
> With mekil honour in erd he maid his offering,
> Syne buskit hame the samyne way that he before yude.
>
> (ll. 301-04)

The main objective of the travel and, by implication, its meaning are displaced. Jerusalem becomes a mere place Arthur passes through before invading Golagros' lands. The "honour" he displays in his offering can only be contextualised as an empty act in which the manners and ritualistic proceedings of devotion have replaced the religious significance of penance and repentance. If Arthur's political righteousness is put into question through his menace to Golagros, so is his Christian piety in the Holy Land. Arthur and his concept of *pax arturica* will have to be regenerated both in the political and spiritual arenas. Arthur's military intervention is by no means just since, according to Aquinas, in such cases warfare would be vindicated only if "on the part of those making the war there is a right intention, to achieve some good or avoid some evil" (Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* II-II, Qu. 40).

The reworking of the *sens* of the *First Continuation* affects not only the plot but the representation of characters, too. Spynagros, one of Arthur's knights, acting as a

mediator's voice between the audience and the poet, takes it upon himself to tell Arthur's retinue (and by implication the audience) about Golagros' attributes. Spynagros' *encomium* of Golagros first centres on his *proeza* and handsomeness. More important than his courtly and knightly virtues, however, is the following remark: "He [Golagros] is ane lord riale, / Ane seymly soverane in sale" (ll. 359-60), whom his subjects love.

Arthur's spiritual evolution is discussed in connection with sovereignty and questions the Arthurian dream of conquest. The King must redress his actions and understand the real range and limitations of his royal privileges. Jack notes that, owing to the evolution of the battle, Arthur is forced to cast doubt on his earlier pride (Jack 1974-75: 14). As argued in the preceding chapter, the series of combats between Arthur's and Golagros' men lacks the ornamented language of chivalry of the French original. If this serves to challenge the nature of warfare and undermine its presupposed heroism and chivalric worth, within the King of Britain's regeneration process the meaningless displays of violence also operate as the progressive development of spiritual awareness.

From the first joust between Gaudifeir and Galiot (ll. 545-83), there is a gradual escalation of bloodshed and desolation, which the monarch cannot fail to see. Spynagros' warning is confirmed "Mony ledis salbe loissit, and liffis forlorne" (l. 277). As in the other Scottish romances, it is through an adverse situation of profound crisis (in this case, the disastrous development of the confrontation) that the king will begin his learning process. Only through several blows to the Arthurian order, will Arthur start questioning the correctness of his policies and actions owing to a progressive spiritual awareness.

While the first fight ends with Gaudofeir taking Galiot prisoner, the following confrontations cause the death of Sir Regal, Sir Rannald and Sir Edmond. Prisoners

are taken on both sides too. No band seems to have taken a clear advantage over the opponent. The only conclusion for the audience of the romance to reach is the uselessness of Arthur's unjust attack on Golagros' territory. To Arthur, however, it will take a longer time to understand. The King is not prepared to abandon his desires of conquest:

> The King grantit the gait to Schir Gawane,
> And prayt to the grete God to grant him his grace,
> Him to save and to salf, that is our soverane,
> As he is the makar of man, and alkyn myght haise.
>
> (ll. 791-794)

Although Arthur's first address to God acknowledges the superiority of His mysterious ways over the British King's own will and plans, the only reason why he reverts to Him is that the one who is going to combat Golagros is Gawain, his nephew, whom he holds in high esteem.

As well as being his favourite knight and one of his own kin, Gawain is the King's sole hope to perpetuate his dream in so far as he does not have a rightful heir with his wife Guenevere. This familial and hierarchical position at this stage results in a formal rather than in a heartfelt submission to God. Indeed his previous assumption that God is on his side demonstrates his complete blindness and misunderstanding of what is occurring. The first approach to the Almighty proves to be as hollow and meaningless as his conception of *pax arturica* and his strictly physical peregrination to Jerusalem. The only positive thing to be said about the monarch is that, at least, he shows some kind of humane attitude, which he did not express just before the battle when he menacingly claimed that "[...] mony wedou / Ful wraithly sal weip" (ll. 297-98).

Not until he sees Gawain in real peril, does he behave in a more profoundly pious manner: he prays with tears streaming down his face "[f]or Gawyne the gude" (l. 953-59). For the first time, the king is primarily concerned with his nephew's fate rather than with his conquest. Nevertheless, the sovereign does not consider the wrongfulness of overstepping his authority yet. A more radical change in the Wheel of Fortune is needed before he redresses his attitude towards the good administration of justice. Hence, Gawain's fake defeat works on two main levels of interpretation: first, it helps Arthur to realise that the foundations of the *pax arturica* are not always synonymous with a just cause; and second, he finally comprehends the temporality of earthly power and possessions:

> "The flour of knighthede is caught throu his cruelté!
> Now is the Round Tabil rebutit, richest of rent,
> Quhen wourschipfull Wawane, the wit of our were,
> Is led to ane presoune;
> Now failyeis gude fortoune!"
>
> (ll. 1135-39)

In the defeat of Gawain, he discerns the catastrophic end of the Round Table and its ideals, which he has not respected by waging war on Golagros.

Still blind, Arthur puts the blame on *Fortuna* in the same way as Boethius does in *De Consolatione Philosophiae*:

> Else why does slippery Fortune range,
> Encompassing such violent change?
> Harsh pains, owed villainy as its due
> Instead the innocent pursue.
> With wicked ways ensconced on high,
> We blameless souls unjustly lie,

Our necks pressed down by guilty men;
Virtue's bright sheen is hidden then
In blind darkness. Probity
Endures crushing iniquity
Sworn lies and specious deceit
Attract no danger or defeat;

(Book I. 5)

At this stage, neither Arthur nor the Boethius persona can perceive God's divine patterning of the world. They are still too attached to material precepts to assimilate that. As Lady Philosophy will demonstrate in *De Consolatione*, Fortune is only a tool of Divine Providence. The late medieval commentators on Boethius' work such as Remigius of Auxerre systematically Christianised the "questions that touched the Christian faith. The problems of providence, free will, fate, the nature of God and of good and evil were interpreted largely on Augustinian lines" (Beaumont in Gibson [ed] 1981: 290). In this milieu, the temporal harshness and incomprehensibility of earthly existence conform to an anagogical providential design whose ends are good — leading to *beatitudo*.

This Boethian-Augustinian philosophical bedrock is not so evident in the *First Continuation*. This is shown in Arthur's reaction after listening to the news about his nephew's joust:

Le rois ne les pot plus oïr,
Ains se vait sor un lit gesir;
De son mantel son cief covri,
Ainc hom ne vit mais si mari.

(ll. 6437-40)

The image of Arthur is that of profound sadness, but the Boethian element is not present. The Scottish author re-elaborates the representation of the British King according to different thematic and structural principles. The Boethian background revitalises the notion of spiritual journey. The last passages of the romance will reveal to what extent Arthur has learned his lesson.

By the end of *Golagros and Gawane*, Arthur renounces Golagros' allegiance, which at first sight seems to imply that he has learned to be a good monarch again. However, it is Golagros who emerges as the prefect representation of a lord since he prioritises his country's interests to his own. Like Arthur, the knight laments the loss of sovereignty in a manner consistent with Boethian-Aristotelian philosophical thought. This is again absent from the French original:

> "Sen Fortoune cachis the cours, throu hir quentys,
> I did it noght for nane dreid that I had to de,
> Na for na fauting of hart, na for na fantise."
>
> (ll. 1220-22)

The beginning of his complaint follows the same thematic structure as that of Arthur. Golagros does not seem to understand why everything has gone so wrong, when he did his best. At first sight, then, both characters may seem to share a similar misunderstanding of God's mysterious procedures. But unlike Arthur, Golagros did fight according to right. Further, as lines 1223-28 underline, Golagros acknowledges God's Divine Providence on which the capricious *Fortuna* depends:

> "Quhare Criste cachis the cours, it rynnis quently —
> May nowthir power nor pith put him to prise.
> Quhan onfortone quhelmys the quheil, thair gais grace by;
> Quha may his danger endure or destanye dispise,
> That led men in langour ay lestand inly,

The date na langar may endure na Drightin devinis.

(ll. 1223-28)

His conclusion entails an acceptance of his fate and his willingness to comprehend the course of things within the limitation of human knowledge: "Ilkane be werk and be will / Is worth his rewarde" (ll. 1244-45). He possesses a spiritual nobility superior to that of the British monarch. Like Boethius, he learns that

> Adverse Fortune benefits people more than good, for whereas good Fortune seems to fawn on us, she invariably deceives us with the appearance of happiness, adverse Fortune is always truthful, and shows by her mutability that she is inconstant. The first deceives, the second instructs. (*De Consolatione Philosophiae*, Book II. 8)

Golagros' implied disposition to understand and learn rounds off his image as perfect knight and ruler completely. As a matter of fact, he has already seen the loyalty and love of his subjects even after defeat.

After this, Arthur is the one who should show equal magnanimity and gained knowledge. In victory, Arthur shows the *cortesia* that appertains to a king. If in the previous passages he has come to resemble Kay owing to his *vilania* and proneness to unjustified use of violence (Jack 1974-75: 10), now he behaves according to the courtly norm:

> [...] sen thi [Golagros'] lawté is lell,
> That thow my kyndnes wil heill,
> The mare is thi price.

(ll. 1308-10)

Arthur gallantly recognises Golagros' worth and has no qualms in praising a valiant enemy. Now that the war is over, he does not look for revenge but acts as a

regenerated person and "[o]f Schir Gologras grant blith wes the King" (l. 1328). At a personal level, then, Arthur has recovered successfully.

After enjoying Golagros' hospitality for nine days, the British King will have to prove whether his lesson has also been learned in the territory of politics. Although he implicitly realises the failure of the *pax arturica* being based on military destruction, when he allows Golagros to regain his freedom, he does so as a "reward" rather than on the basis of Golagros' right to freedom:[191]

> "Heir mak I the reward, as I have resoune,
> Before thir senyeouris in sight, semely beside,
> As tuiching thi temporalité, in toure and in toune,
> In firth, forest, and fell, and woddis so wide:
> I mak releisching of thin allegiance."
>
> (ll. 1354-58)

Therefore, although Arthur has learned a lesson, yet he fails to understand the real nature of a nation's right to freedom. Like Edward I, he only sees himself as the Elect able to govern over other countries other than his own.

According to medieval political theory, as John of Salisbury cites from the *Deuteronomy* in Book IV of his *Policraticus*, right can only be given by God:

> When you have come to the land which the Lord your God will give you, and have possessed it and dwelled therein, you will say, 'I will select a king over me, like the nations that are around me;' you will select him

[191] This other extra tension is most probably reminiscent of the Scottish political situation since in the *First Continuation* Arthur never renounces the Riche Soudoyer's fealty:

> Leur homages prent demanois,
> Ainc en un jor tant n'en cosquist,
> Si con Bliobliheri dist.
> Puis li orent molt grant mestier
> En mains lius li bons saudoier.
>
> (ll. 6550-54)

Arthur's conquest is represented as heroic action of the greatest magnitude. The political references which problematise the vassalage of the Riche Soudoyer/Golagros are exclusive to the Scottish romance.

> king over you, whom the Lord your God will choose from among one of your brethren. You cannot make a foreigner king over you, someone who is not your brother. (*Deuteronomy* 17 in *Policraticus* IV)

Hence, by bestowing the privileges of kingship and freedom as a personal "reward" rather than as a right, Arthur plays a role which is reserved to God himself. As a human being, the monarch should have grasped the real nature of kingship and sovereignty as a divine gift, not as a matter on which a person can decide. Moreover, his being a foreigner disqualifies him from ruling over another people. He only learns about the absurdity of his non-justifiable invasion, but he is still blind to the significance of royalty beyond earthly power. His partial regeneration foreshadows the future downfall of the Arthurian kingdom.

***Lancelot of the Laik*: Arthur, the King in Need of Learning**

In the Scottish *Lancelot*, Arthur's learning process is totally dependent on the conception of good kingship. In this context, the inclusion of a prophetic vision does not operate as a justification for political action as in *The Wallace* or *La Vie de Saint Louis*, but as a warning to Arthur owing to his bad administration of justice. Even before Galiot challenges Arthur's kingdom, strange nightmares disturb the king's sleep:

> Apone the ground and liging hyme besid,
> Throw wich anon out of his slep he stert,
> Abasit and adred into his hart.
>
> (ll. 376-78)

There is an implication of some kind of internal preoccupation which prevents Arthur from sleeping peacefully. Later, the audience will learn that it is a subconscious reaction to his bad government.

Macrobius' *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, which became one of the most authoritative books on the interpretations of dreams in the Middle Ages (Stahl [trans] 1952: 54), analyses and catalogues the nature and meaning of dreams:[192]

> All dreams my be classified under five main types: There is the enigmatic dream, in Greek *oneiros*, in Latin *somnium*; second, there is the prophetic vision, in Greek *horama*, in Latin *visio*; third there is the oracular dream, in Greek *chrematismos*, in Latin *oraculum*; fourth, there is the nightmare, in Greek *enypnion*, in Latin *insomnium*; and last, the apparition, in Greek *phantasma*, which Cicero, when he has occasion to use the word, calls *visum*. (Book I.iii)

Some of these dreams are mere nightmares with no hidden significance and others such as the prophetic *visio* and the *oraculum*, when interpreted correctly, reveal truths. According to this classification, that of Arthur falls into the category of *visio*, as the reader will learn when Amytans unveils its meaning.

Although the monarch's dream is taken from the French original, there are two main differences between the texts. First, the chaplain to whom Arthur first relates his dream is not present in the Scottish romance. Second, the Queen's replies entail a distinct attitude towards her husband. In *Lancelot do Lac*, the aforesaid chaplain dismisses Arthur's concern: "'Sire, fait il, ne vos chaut, car songes est noianz'" (p. 261). The deployment of the word "songes" is of the greatest significance in the context of prophetic dreams. In French, "songe" is used to cover both *somnium* and *insomnium*, while "vision" encapsulates the meanings of *visio* and *visum*. The chaplain's use of "songe" denies its Christian-divine origin. The impossibility of disentangling the meaning of the dream ontologically underlines the political and chivalric decline of Arthur's court.

[192] Lupack also refers to Macrobius in a footnote to explain Arthur's dream. (Lupack [ed] 1994: 119)

In *Lancelot do Lac*, Guenevere simply confirms the chaplain's assertion: "Et li rois lo redit a la reine, et ele lo dit tot autretel" (p. 261). Conversely, in the Scottish text, the Queen's answer is longer and far more severe:

> "Shir, no record lyith to such thing;
> Wharfor now, shir, I pray yow tak no kep
> Nore traist into the vanyteis of slep.
> For thei are thingis that askith no credens
> Bot causith of sum maner influens,
> Empriss of thoght, ore superfleuytee,
> Or than sum othir casualytee"
>
> (ll. 388-94)

In this *amplificatio* of the original, Guenevere is given the chaplain's role. In doing so, the *makar* makes her deploy the authoritative language of clerks to put forward an issue about which she proves to be absolutely mistaken. But even more important than her erroneous reply is the manner in which it differs from the original prose romance. The French Guenevere seems to corroborate an idea without making any kind of judgement, whereas the Scottish Guenevere's severity of her reprimand accentuates the distance between the king and his queen.

Despite his wife's opposition, Arthur wants to disentangle the meaning of his nightmares. His procedures will indicate that he is no longer the idealised ruler of Britain. Conversely, in so far as the astrologers have hidden what they have discovered "[...] for dreid of his danger" (l. 444), he makes use of all his power to force them to tell him what they see in his dreams:

> Than was he [Arthur] wroth into hisself and noyt
> And maid his vow that thei [the astrologers] shal ben destroyt.
> [...]

> He bad them [his men] into secret wyss that thei
>
> Shud do no harm but only them assey.
>
> (ll. 471-72 / 477-78)

The terror expressed by the astrologers in line 444 is totally justified. The king employs royal authority not for the common welfare but to obtain the desired information from the soothsayers. Feigned though the execution is, such an extremely cruel proceeding has nothing to do with the notion of good kingship. Although it can be argued that the future of the monarch cannot be disengaged from that of the kingdom and, therefore, the "common weal" is also at a stake, the methods Arthur deploys question the abusive overstepping of authority. At the same time, the fact that the astrologers are terrified even before the threat to their lives confirms both the distance between the monarch and his subjects (by no means is he his people's king) and the abhorrent perception that they have of him.

In Philippe de Mézières' allegorical composition *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin* (*c.* 1389), whose third book also deals with a king's instruction, Royne Verite stresses the importance of treating fairly all the people under young Charles' charge. She tells him:

> Que tu doyes garder souverainement a ton plain pouoir les femmes de tes subgiez, les mariz, et tous leurs biens quelxconques de toute violence et de toute tyrannie, voire de ta personne royalle premierement, de ceulx de ton hostel, des poursuivans et de toutes autres personnes, par telle maniere que tu vouldroies que on feist de toy et de tes choses. (Book III. 203)

This profoundly Christian and politically effective attitude has nothing to do with Arthur at the beginning of *Lancelot of the Laik.* He is failing both as a Christian and as a capable king. As a result, the kingdom itself is bound to collapse.

In order to discredit him even more, the undermining description of Arthur and his royal policies is quickly contrasted with those of Galiot, who possesses all the possible knightly and courtly virtues: he is "[...] the farest knycht, / [...] / [...] ful of larges and humylytee / [and] curag", a great young conqueror and is by "[...] his men so louit [...]" (ll. 601-20). Mapstone affirms that the virtues of wisdom, manhood and courage attached to Galiot suggest that he is a standard against which the deteriorated image of Arthur is going to be compared (Mapstone 1986: 171-72). The war is transferred to the domain of personal confrontation: apparently, only Arthur's personal and political regeneration could withstand Galiot's invasion.

While in *The Bruce*, *The Wallace* and *Golagros and Gawane* the spiritual awareness of the main characters is an important issue, *Lancelot of the Laik's* didactic mode means that the component strands of spiritual regeneration are of less importance. This makes the narrative to focus on instruction on exemplary kingship, reducing the learning process to the necessary steps which Arthur must take to become a good monarch again.

After a first battle with Galiot's superior army, the British King will benefit from Galiot's *cortesia*, whereas the wise clerk's advice will enable Arthur to understand his misdeeds and find the right way again. His learning evolution will have to be both personal and political. The transcendence of the passage is underlined by the name of the clerk itself. Although his name is not mentioned in *Lancelot do Lac*, the author of the Scottish text took Amytans from a later scene occurring in the *Cyclic Lancelot*, in which the adviser is not just a clerk but a hermit and former chaplain.[193] At this point of profound crisis, the King requires Amytans' presence and advice. He hastens to

[193] In Sommer's edition (IV. 76-77), Amustans is a hermit, who had been Arthur's chaplain. He reproves Arthur for having disobeyed the Holy Church and deserted his wife in favour of the false Guenevere. This situation is parallel to that of the unnamed clerk: both clerks admonish the king to redress his wicked ways at a time that his kingdom is in danger. The Scottish *makar's* transmutation of the name posits his intention to provide the advice to Arthur with a spiritual aura. That the hermit's scene occurs in the *Cyclic Lancelot*, but is absent from the *Non-Cyclic*, indicates that the *makar* was probably working with a version of the *Cyclic* text.

pronounce the most severe statement possible concerning Arthur's government of his lands:

> That is to say, yow art so far myswent
> Of wykitness upone the urechit dans
> That yow art fallyng in the storng vengans
> Of Goddis wreth that shal the son devour.
>
> (ll. 1320-23)

These lines reaffirm the astrologers' suppositions and allow the king to realise the extent to which his Arthurian dream has degenerated. He has offended the source of his power, God, whom, as stated by Aquinas, he should try to imitate, being his representative on earth.

The fact that he is illegitimate intensifies Arthur's reliance on God's grace in choosing him as ruler. Amytans recalls:

> [...] For, as theselvyne wat,
> It cummyth al bot only of His myght
> And not of the nor of thi elderis richt
> To the discending as in heritage,
> For yow was not byget onto spousag.
>
> (ll. 1330-34)

The clerk keeps using the same menacing tone to open Arthur's eyes. The wise man's authority contrasts with that of the astrologers who did not dare to tell the King what they saw in his dreams. The sovereign's political maturity is also mirrored in his preference for Amytans' honest, though implacable counsel. But it is only under these particular circumstances, in which his material possessions are jeopardised, that he agrees to accept criticism. As the Boethius persona in *De Consolatione*, the menace to earthly stability is the first cause that enables the protagonist to progress

spiritually. At this stage, then, Arthur's concern is the safeguard of his territories rather than a profound inner commitment.

As a good orator with an excellent command of the *Modus Proferendi*, Amytans seeks to *move* Arthur so that he can be more convincingly persuaded into *instruction*. In *De Doctrina Christiana*, St. Augustine recommends Cicero as the preceptor of the Christian oratory. Following the latter's schema of oratory delivery, based upon the triad *docere* (instruct), *delectare* (delight) and *movere* (move), the Bishop of Hippo drew the guidelines for the Christian orator. *Docere* basically deals with the subject matter, whereas *delectare* and *movere* centre on the manner in which this subject matter is to be transmitted. As well as its obvious informative objective, instruction should be pleasant and appealing to hold the attention of the audience. Amytans avoids *delectare* through his speech. *Per contra*, he threatens and disturbs Arthur to the extreme. Not only is this method appropriate to the circumstances, but it also enhances the culpability of Arthur, who can do nothing but acknowledge his sins against God through the misgovernance of his subjects.

Before instruction itself, Amytans enumerates Arthur's faults, emphasising the oppression of the poor and the loss of his people's hearts. Consequently, he can only expect God to destroy him since "[...] He is bycummyn thi [Arthur's] fo" (ll. 1344-88). Amytans' oration has an immediate effect on Arthur. His speech has been successful:

> "Maister," quod he, "of youre benevolens
> Y yow besech that tueching myn offens
> Yhe wald vichsaif your consell to me if
> How I sal mend and ek hereftir leif."
>
> (ll. 1389-92)

Submission to his instructor is absolute. There is a first sign of Arthur's evolution from the haughty king who menaced the astrologers to a humble apprentice who wants to redress his wrongdoings. He implicitly acknowledges his fallibility and the righteousness of Arthurian dream.

After he is made to confess his sins, a significant divergence from *Lancelot do Lac* occurs. In the French original, although Galehot decides to stop the war against Arthur just before Amytans' arrival (p. 283), he does not communicate his decision to Arthur through *li Roi des Cent Chevaliers* until after the king has already learned his lesson (p. 293). On the contrary, in the Scottish Lancelot, the *makar* places this scene a short time after his confession. By doing so, the direct intervention of God is implied as Amytans states:

> This Maister saith, "How lykith God dispone
> Now may yhow se and suth is my recorde.
> For by Hyme now is makith this accorde,
> And by non uthir worldly providens
> Sauf only grant of His benevolans,
> To se if that the likyth to amend
> And to provid thi cuntré to defend.
>
> (ll. 1590-96)

With this rearrangement of the narrative, there is a direct cause-effect connection between Arthur's willingness to atone for his sins, his subsequent confession and God's intrusion in the normal development of events. As Mapstone affirms, this re-structuring of events stresses the Christian element. Should the British King act in accordance with God's precepts, his possibilities of recovery will augment (Mapstone 1986: 177). In fact, if it had not been for this truce, the battle would certainly have ended up with Arthur's defeat since both his champions Gawain and the disguised

Lancelot were recovering from their wounds. That Amytans attributes this to Divine Providence redefines the nature of this war in the realm of the sacred in a much more explicit way than in *Lancelot do Lac*. Galiot and his army are allegorically transmuted into God's weapons to chastise the Elect once the British King has misuse the Almighty's *gift* and lost the real spirit of the *pax arturica* of chivalry and Christian order. Arthur's adverse *fortuna* acquires spiritual resonance as relabelled under the auspices of Divine Province.

The new significance attained by Amytans' admonition transcends the merely earthly aspects of good government. Not only has Arthur failed as a monarch, but also as a Christian knight. The wise clerk deploys many rhetorical devices in the structuring of his speech with direct and clear language insofar as the main aim of an oration is clarity as St Augustine expresses in *De Doctrina Christiana*:

> Of al thi puple the hartis ben ylost
> And tynt richt throw thyne awn mysgovernans,
> Of averice and of thyne errogans.
> What is o prince, quhat is o governoure
> Withouten fame of worschip and honour?
> What is his mycht, suppos he be a lorde,
> If that his folk sal nocht to hyme accorde?
>
> (ll. 1520-26)

Amytans insists on the lost hearts of a king's subject once more. He counterbalances the King's vices with the necessary features he should possess. The use of rhetorical questions is deployed to implicate Arthur's thinking and meditation on his failure. As expounded in the representation of Balliol and Comyn in *The Bruce*, young Bruce in *The Wallace* and Arthur in *Golagros and Gawane*, the exercise of a king's *privata voluntas*, instead of acting according to the common good, is the very origin of

iniquitous rule, which entails the misrule of his realm. The association of bad government with two of the deadly sins, avarice and pride, situates Arthur in an unsustainable position. It also justifies the desertion of his vassals as he himself has failed to fulfil the feudal contract.

Arthur's image is further damaged through the reference to renown and honour, which the Round Table no longer possesses:

> Nay! that shal sone his hie estat consome,
> For many o knycht therby is broght ydoune
> All uteraly to ther confusioune.
> For oft it makith uther kingis by
> To wer on them in trast of victory.
>
> (ll. 1532-36)

Amytans' exposition of Arthur's "mysgouernans" is completed with the loss of his position if he fails to perform his royal duties. As a leader of his country, his behaviour should serve as a mirror. The ultimate consequence of that recalls the war against Galiot: the debility of bad rule encourages others to overthrow his power. In this particular context, the religious correctness of Galiot's invasion is implicitly legitimised through God's intervention.

Subsequently, Amytans proceeds to instruct Arthur in the mechanisms of kingship. On the whole, Amytans' counsel closely follows the typical characteristics associated with a Christian king: he advocates *justice* and *mercy* for both "pur & rik" (ll.1611-68) as an earthly mirror of the divine administration and ordering of the world. After these typically kingly characteristics, Amytans also stresses the qualities of "larges, humilitee and manhed", citing Alexander as an example of the three (ll. 1835-53). These features are more generally associated with knights as an integrative part of the courtly and knightly norms. The three virtues embrace the main attributes of a

Christian king or knight. The monarch's demeanour towards others either nobles or members of the Third Estate must be governed by his *cortesia* as the reference to "larges" indicates. The more purely religious components of his behaviour are enshrined in "humilitee," whereas his way of action in the battlefield must show his "manhed." Therefore, by alluding to these three attributes, Amytans summarises the entire regal and knightly conduct in the different spheres of the society.

Mapstone points out that "in *Lancelot of the Laik*, as far as it has survived, although Arthur may regain his wisdom, "manhede" is far more a characteristic of his knights" (Mapstone 1986: 171). Yet within the whole context of the *Prose Lancelot* including not only *Lancelot do Lac,* but also *La Queste de le Sainct Graal* and *La Morte le Roi Artu*, the reader does encounter the British King fighting for his lands. In fact, in the final battle against Modred, Arthur takes a very active role not only as a military leader, but also as a warrior:

> Il [Arthur] tint un glaive gros et fort, et lesse corre tant comme il pot del cheval trere; et Modrés, qui bien connoist que li rois ne bee fors a li acirre, nel refusa pas, einz li adesce la teste del cheval, et li rois, qui li vient de toute sa force, le firent si durement qu'il li ront les mailles del hauberc et li met par mi le cors e fer de son glaive. (*La Morte le Roi Artu*, ch. 190)

In an opposite manner to the passive Arthur of Chrétien de Troyes' compositions, the King of the *Vulgate* does display his "manhede" as this last combat with Modred proves. Whereas in Chrétien's *romans* the heart of the narrative explores the ethos of individual knights, the more epic tone of the *Lancelot en prose*, in which the whole worth and evolution of the Arthurian kingdom is debated, helps to reassess the role of its leader.

One of the passages that the *makar* highlights is that on *largeza*. Although the French author already places a lot of importance on a king's liberality, the Scottish

poet reworks and extends the main remarks on *largeza*. He regards this virtue as the key point in the relationship between the monarch and his subjects no matter to what social stratum they belong. Amytans' insistence on this, which he labels as "[...] the tresour of o king" (l. 1766), develops two major conceptualisations. First, its most concrete utility in the context of kingship is not simple generosity devoid of self-interest, as expected from a knight without the political responsibilities of a monarch. Rather it is exploited to serve as a tool to keep the subjects happy and secure their loyalty to the crown. Yet, Amytans does not tell Arthur to do this arbitrarily but according to position and merit, an idea very different from the French original. While it is stated that "[...] povretez n'a mestier que d'amendement, et richece n'a mestier que de delit" (p. 288), *Lancelot do Lac* does so in the milieu of the usefulness those things can have, something that has little to do with merit.

Secondly, the wise clerk manages to reach a consensus between this rather utilitarian interpretation of *largeza* and a more affectionate vision of it:

> Bot that thow ifith, if with boith two,
> That is to say, uith hart and hand atonis.
> As so the wys man ay the ift disponis.
>
> (ll. 1763-65)

In this understanding of good kingship as a learning process within an essentially moral and affective view of authority, to give riches for the sake of buying loyalty would not be a correct policy, but a simple tool to maintain a king's position in power. Being generous "uith hart" recaptures the original significance of *largeza*. Arthur needs to comprehend this if he wants to regain his wisdom, otherwise his acts will remain valueless at the spiritual level of regeneration. Earthly power and possessions would be prioritised, which is exactly the opposite of Amytans' intention. If loyalty can be bought, it can be short-lived, too, inasmuch as any other lord could offer more

material rewards in return for the service of Arthur's subjects. Therefore, only a more profound conception of *largeza* as true generosity can gain what Amytans accused Arthur of having lost, his people's hearts. Unlike bought loyalty, love between lord and vassal coming from the sincere use of liberality can make Arthur's reign survive Galiot's attack.

As also noted by Mapstone, the *makar* introduces "a disquisition on the dangers of flattery" (Mapstone 1986: 174), which is absent from *Lancelot do Lac*. By including this, the Scottish text enhances the realistic atmosphere of kingly advice that is central to the romance. Flattery as one of the most pernicious dangers at court is a recurrent theme in late medieval Scottish literature with clear reference to the court of the time. William Dunbar, for example, warns James IV about the corruption of his retinue both through comedy and serious verse. In the satirical poem "Ane Ballat of the Fenyeit Freir of Tungland," Dunbar deploys the real person of a courtier to extrapolate the corruption of James IV's counsellors; whereas in the poem "How sould I Governe me?" the *makar* insinuates that courtiers' behaviour is empty.[194] They act according to formulated norms, implying that they always try to please the monarch through flattery. Some years later, David Lindsay in his *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* disguises the allegorical character of Flatterie as Devotioun. This causes the bad functioning of King Humantie's court.[195]

In *Lancelot of the Laik*, the exposition of flattery works in the same manner. Political analogies like the following would be interpreted locally and immediately by the audience:

[194] All these works by Dunbar can be found in *The Mercat Anthology of Early Scottish Literature 1375-1707*, edited by Jack and Rozendaal.

[195] Flattery is traditionally associated with one of the danger which kings should avoid. In *Le Songe du Vieil Pelerin*, young Charles is also warned against flattery and flatterers:

> "Encores, Beau Filz, pour non estre feruz soudainement du vent soutil de Chippre, c'est assavoir de vaine gloire, es rappors qui te seront faiz, es sermons, collacions et proposicions royalles, desquelles ta personne, ta puissance, ton sens, et ta vaillance, et ta magnificence royalle par paraboles dorees et adournees de la forge de flaterie seront eslievees et exaulcees, s'il se puet dire, jusques au ciel." (Book III. 233)

Into the realme about o king is holde
O flatterere were than is the stormys cold,
Or pestelens, and mor the realme annoyith;
For he the law and puple boith destroyith.

(ll. 1929-32)

Flattery is devastating for the kingdom. It goes beyond simple adulation to become the cause for the debacle of law. This together with the destruction of the king's vassals poses two great problems to Arthur. First, law, and by implication justice, cannot be accomplished when the king is blinded by flatterers. This brings about the sovereign's failure to his people. If Amytans has already mentioned the necessity for recovering the "puple's harts" through the good understanding and display of *largeza*, flattery's eradication from the realm is a necessary conditioning of that argument. Otherwise feudal interdependence and support between lord and vassal will also be unsuccessful; hence, Arthur's personal and political recovery would become impossible. Significantly, Amytans attributes the existence of flattery in the court to the king's own fault owing to either his "ignorans" (ll. 1935-1940), his own viciousness (ll. 1941-44) or his foolishness (ll. 1945-51). By placing all the responsibility on Arthur's side and not on that of the flatterers, Arthur himself will have to get rid of all these false counsellors to wipe out his misbehaviour.

Similarly, in Mézières' *Songe*, Royne Verite makes the young sovereign responsible for the choice of either good or bad members of the royal household:

> "Il t'est demostre en groz comment saigement de meureement tu doys eslire tes conseilliers, tes officiers, et tes serviteurs, par lesquelx a ton commandement la nef francoise soit dignement governee. Car s'ilz seront bons, Beau Filz, Fieu en sera serviz et tu en seras a repoz et auras pou a

faire. Et s'il sera le contraire, tu orras souvent mainte querelle, que te doivra desplaire." (Book III. 256)

Thus, a good monarch must learn to discern between good and evil not only in his actions but also in his nominations of administrators of the country. This statement presupposes that both literary Arthur and historical Charles must learn or possess wisdom. The similarities between both works place the advice to Arthur is a very realistic context. In the French text, Royne Verite concludes with the maxim a king should be feared without tyranny and loved without flattery (Book III. 257).

After such a devastating outline of his misrule and misconduct, the British King humbly agrees to follow the clerk's advice:

"Maister," quod he, "me think rycht profitable
Yowr conseell is and wonder honorable
For me and good. Rycht well I have consavit
And in myne hartis inwartness resavit.
I shall fulfill and do yowr ordynans
Als far of wit as my wit I have suffisans.

(ll. 1999-2004)

Arthur's words reveal that he is beginning to evolve: he discerns between Christian virtues and vices. Through his humility, a sign of the acknowledgement of his fallibility, he contemplates the possibility of regeneration. He does so not only because this is the sole way in which he will avoid defeat by Galiot, but also because there is an inner disposition to spiritual reformation. He comes to terms with the idea that his reign and his life are transitory. It is only in the kingdom of heaven in the afterlife that he might be rewarded.

The conclusion of the learning process differs greatly from that of *The Wallace*. While the allegorical fabric of the historical romance focuses on the religious virtues

of Wallace's victory over death, the literary mode of the chivalric romance, following the advice to princes pattern, conditions a completely different outcome of the narrative. Before Amytans goes away and Arthur puts into practice his good intentions, the King still has another question for the clerk. He wants to know the real meaning of his nightmare, which the astrologers were not very successful in explaining. Unlike the advice section, which the *makar* amplifies, the explication of the dream is simply transformed into verse. This confirms the Scottish poet's didactic purpose with regard to kingship.

The final enquiry before the wise clerk's departure concerns the outcome of the battle. Amytans' answer, however, does not clarify who the victor will be:

> "What that he hecht, yow shall no forther know;
> His dedis sall herefterwart hyme schaw.
> Bot contrar the he shall be found no way.
> No more tharof as now Y will the say."
>
> (ll. 2141-44)

Although Amytans acknowledges God's power to foresee and alter the course of events, the inconclusive reply connotes that Arthur's acts and his possible regeneration will determine the outcome of the war against Galiot. The clerk advocates a human being's free will to choose either good or bad according to the official positioning of the Catholic Church of the time. It claimed that people have free will to choose the right or the wrong way:

> We assert both that God knows all things before they come to pass, and that we do by our free will whatsoever we know and feel to be done by us only because we will it. [...] But it does not follow that, though there is for God a certain order of all causes, there must therefore be nothing depending in the free exercise of our own wills, for our wills themselves

> are included in that order of causes which is certain to God, and is embraced by his foreknowledge, for human wills are also human actions.
>
> (St. Augustine, *City of God*, V.9)

Arthur's inner metamorphosis is in his own hands. The way of action taken by the British sovereign to feel spiritually exhilarated is not so profusely detailed as Amytans' lesson. Arthur's regeneration, however, is rather schematic. Although it is true that the French original just devoted half of one paragraph to explain Arthur's inner recovery (about nine lines on page 304), the author of the Scottish work does not amplify this passage. Again, this confirms that the *makar* concentrates his discourse on the advice to princes tradition.

The first illustration of this change of attitude towards his subjects takes place during the Lady of Melyhalt's visit when the King repeatedly asks her to stay:

> Bot yhit the King hir prayt on sich wyss
> That sche remanit whill the thrid day,
> Syne tuk hir leif to pasing hom hir way.
>
> (ll. 2346-48)

The King's hospitality and *cortesia* are highlighted. Following Amytans' counsel, political and military dexterity must be accompanied by the exhibition of the manners of *cortesia* to recover his people's hearts. That she remained for three days confirms that the Lady of Melyhalt's sincere loyalty is recovered.

Once Arthur has demonstrated he is acting in accordance with the wise man's teachings for the first time in the romance, the last twenty-eight lines of book II (ll. 2443-2470) serve to summarise the king's policies for regenerative action:

> And largly he iffith and dispent
> Rewardis, boith oneto the pur and riche
> And holdith fest throw al the yher eliche.

In al the warld passing gan his name;
He chargit not bot of encress and famme
And how his puples hartis to empless.

(ll. 2450-55)

Arthur regains all the honour and way of action which a Christian King should always possess and deploy. Symbolically his regeneration transforms him into the people's king of world-wide fame that he used to be as a young man. As the head of the communal body, his rebirth also connotes the rebirth of his country and his subjects through the recovery of harmony and happiness. Now the king can match Galiot and the two armies can confront on equal terms. As the Elect, it is not difficult for him to provide his actions with *cortesia* and *largeza*.

At the spiritual level, Arthur has accomplished his rebirth into the ideal king. In the first chapter it was argued that, in the political arena, it could be considered rather ironic that after his regeneration it will be Lancelot and not himself who is going to retain the king's lands. Yet, when this is redefined in the realm of allegory, Lancelot himself could be labelled as God's envoy. In this context, such an affirmation should not be considered too daring inasmuch as the figure of Lancelot in the *Vulgate* does function as a metaphorical grail. He is the one who is most desired by the queen, giving meaning to her life through *fin'amors*. Something very similar happens with Galehot, whose admiration for Lancelot seems to go beyond knightly admiration, becoming the *jois* of *fin'amors*.

Conclusion

The significance of the good execution of justice and exemplary ruling of a country cannot be detached from the spiritual, moral and/or political evolution of the main characters. The specific historical context of *The Bruce* and *The Wallace* together

with the relocation of the main narrative focus in *Golagros and Gawane* illustrate this link between spiritual and ideological issues and to a lesser extent also in *Lancelot of the Laik*. To do so, the *makars* borrow literary motifs from genres such as dream visions and saints' lives to adapt them to their romances, sometimes more overtly as in the case of *The Wallace* and sometimes less explicitly as in the case of *The Bruce*. In the Arthurian texts, Boethian and Aristotelian influence is more evident than in the *Prose Lancelot* and *The First Continuation*. This renders Arthur's redefining of royal duties more allegorical explicitness. The intimate connection between the heroes' spiritual journey and the political issues regarding kingship and government is a characteristic which brings these four romances together within a homogeneous and distinctive literary tradition.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

When commissioned to compose *The Bruce*, John Barbour's composition went far beyond the commemoration of heroic deeds. He developed specific ideological tenets and literary conventions, which served to establish a national literary tradition in the writing of romances. His cultivated background, including the familiarity with French, Anglo-Norman, English, Latin and not preserved Scottish material, allowed him to readapt existing traditions and *loci communes* to a distinctive and very ambitious project.

Ideologically, in these works the debates on good government and kingship are central to the evolution of the narrative. The individual knightly enterprise typical of the archetypal *roman courtois* is replaced by the commonwealth of the nation. The hero's conflict is not with finding a place in society, but with integrating his feats of arms within the interests of a bigger scheme, which also stands for the future of a people. The love plot is not the primary instigator of the protagonist's *avanture*, but a more realistic motivation comprising a national aspiration to autonomous freedom. Even in *Lancelot of the Laik*, while Lancelot is said to be fighting for the love of Guenevere, his combats are redefined in an epic context of a country's liberation. Hence, the individual crisis of the protagonist found in romances such as those of Chrétien de Troyes becomes a collective question; the quest after identity and a place in the feudal society is transformed into a search for the consolidation of a shared sameness within the world.

All these aspects are directly or indirectly connected with the contemporary political realities of Scotland. The near heroic past of the Wars of Independence is reshaped to appeal to the reigns of Robert II in *The Bruce* and of James III in *The Wallace*. In *The*

Bruce, the image of the King of Scots is constructed along the lines of a *speculum principis* and that of Douglas as the knightly attitude which the nobility should adopt in regards to Robert II. In Hary's *Wallace*, the long-lived animosity towards the English is revived through the figure of William Wallace and his comrades-at-arms at a time when the royal policy of James III favoured a friendly and collaborative approach to the traditional foe. The Arthurian romances, though not so closely related to the realm, also problematise the foundations of good kingship and a people's autonomy. The selections and alterations of particular passages of the French originals convey a different reading in which the Scottish reference both historically and ideological is present. Even *Rauf Coilyear* represents a Charlemagne who is aware of the limitations of royal power: while at court and on the political arena he is the ideal Frankish leader, his submission to the Rauf's rules at his house demonstrates the Emperor's respect for individual freedom.

The profound redefinition of literary devices and forms of expression may appear to be part of a larger British tradition. Like the Scottish texts, English alliterative romances of the fourteenth century such as *Sir Gawain of the Green Knight* do not elaborate on ornamented descriptions of life at court or the intricacies of *fin'amors*. Nevertheless, the English Arthurian romances of the time lack the exact thematic, political focus of the Scottish compositions. It is precisely this narrative axis that may have induced Barbour to simplify or suppress long digressions on courteous manners and love plots. If individual quests and the fulfilment of *fin'amors* were no longer at the core of the story line, their inclusion became optional rather than indispensable.

Barbour established the literary parameters of the Scottish romance tradition rather late (*c.* 1375) in comparison to other European vernacular literatures. He had the advantage of having at his disposal a fully developed range of forms and motifs from

which to select the most suitable for his ambitious project. His subject matter (and that of Hary and the anonymous *makars* of *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane*) required the accentuation of knightly virtues rather than of courtly demeanour. However, had any writers of the *makars* wanted to include the sophistication of a courtly atmosphere, it would not have been at all difficult to represent the figures of Bruce or Wallace along these lines. In fact, in the Arthurian romances not only did the authors minimise such features, but they got rid of many of the courtly scenes appearing in the originals.

In the Scottish romances, then, the knightly feats and conduct dominate the narrative. Displays of *cortesia* are reduced to a minimum. Although the terminology of courtly behaviour is kept, it is very schematically represented. It serves to complement the image of the heroes, but is never one of their primordial attributes. Similarly, *fin'amors* is nothing but a marginal feature, which does not contribute to the protagonists' evolution at all in either historical or courtly romances. In *The Bruce*, Barbour subverts the *amor et militia topos* by displacing the love plot to the English side. Its outcome, with the death of an English knight who wanted to please his lady's requests, questions the validity of such an attitude in real warfare. In *The Wallace*, love is integrated in the nationalistic dialectics of the text. The killing of Wallace's wife brings about further revenge against the English. In the Arthurian works, Lancelot's love for Guenevere is placed at the service of the liberation of Arthur's territories, whereas in *Golagros and Gawane* love is completely removed from the narrative. As a consequence, the number of female figures, who played a basic role in courtly interchanges and the love plot, is drastically reduced, too. This re-codification of *cortesia*, *fin'amors* and the feminine becomes a fundamental trait of the Scottish romance tradition.

The adoption of these thematic motifs and modes of expression configures the literary character of the Scottish romances. The preference for the masculine domain of knighthood to the courtly world leads to the glorification of martial exploits. The language deployed endorses quick action in the narration of events. The dearth of long descriptions of the pomp of tournaments and courtly feasts and of psychological expositions of the lovers' inner state also contributes to create an agile narratorial evolution of the texts. Generally, there are no elaborate digressions from the central theme. The result is a compact romance both narratorially and ideologically. This difference becomes especially obvious when the adaptations of the originals in the Arthurian works are considered. The long French texts, in which many different actions come together, are drastically modified. First, the narrative is very compact; second, the value system is altered: courtliness and *fin'amors* are reduced to a large extent; and third, the political aspects are underlined. The exception to this rule is *Clariodus*, whose adaptation preserves all the ornamentation and psychological debates of the original. Even, *Sir Eger and Sir Gryme*, with a very different subject matter from that of the historical and Arthurian romances, follows the precise syncretism favoured in the Scottish corpus.

The philosophical and religious bedrock of the Scottish texts lies in the broad Aristotelian tradition as adapted to Christian thought and in a very spiritual approach to chivalry. At a time when living a proper life was as important as dying a holy death, the demise of the heroes in the historical romances is presented via conventional Christian symbolism in typological correspondence with Jesus Christ's death. This representation is found in most serious late medieval European romances such as the Anglo-Norman *Chanson de Guillaume le Maréchal* or the French *Vie de Saint Louis*. After the

protagonists solve their terrestrial, political duties, they die in a way in which they secure a place in heaven. Following this *locus classicus*, both Bruce and Wallace instruct David II and Bruce respectively so that the succession in the leadership of Scotland guarantees the autonomy and good functioning of the nation.

The most characteristic traits in the spiritual representation of the heroes, then, fall on the close connection between individual spiritual progression and the notions of good kingship and collective liberty of a people. The shift from the chivalric heroes of early romances to national leaders facilitates this thematic device. In *The Bruce*, Bruce does not just evolve to become a perfect knight questing after ethereal ideals. Rather he is transformed into a self-aware sovereign who must prioritise his nation's needs. In the Arthurian romances, Arthur's progression is not a typical one, either. He is not introduced as a young man but as a mature king, who has forgotten the real signification of *pax arturica*. He must undergo a regeneration process as much relating to his inner self as to the preservation of his kingdom in *Lancelot of the Laik*, or to the respect of Golagros' lands and autonomy in *Golagros and Gawane*. The Aristotelian-Boethian element is more accentuated than in the original French texts. In *The Wallace*, the spiritual journey is structurally different. Hary, inspired by the representations of Saints' Lives, does not portrayed Wallace as the typical knight, who evolves from impulsive young age to wise maturity. Rather the figure of the *puer senex* is translated into the language and thematic strategies of romances. His progression is about awareness of the import of the national cause. His personal revenge is first redefined politically/ethically (the defence of Scotland), then allegorically (the struggle becoming a quasi-sacred *avanture* supported by Saint Andrew and the Virgin Mary), and finally anagogically (his sacrifice as a martyr leading him to salvation). Structurally different though they might

be, in the Scottish romances, the spiritual or ethical evolution of the heroes cannot be dissociated from their political consciousness.

All these shared thematic, philosophical and ideological components constitute the Scottish romance tradition. The only major trait that they do not share is their metrical disposition. In fact, as stated in the introduction, this is the main reason why they have not been considered as belonging to the same corpus so far. Yet the great *makars*, Henryson, Dunbar and Douglas, deployed different modes of expression at the same time that no-one would question being part of the same late medieval Scottish tradition. For this same reason, formal aspects should not hinder us from regarding the romances as constituents of an organic literary unity. Indeed, Hary and the anonymous authors of *Lancelot of the Laik* and *Golagros and Gawane* show the interrelation between the courtly and the romance traditions. The Prologue of the Scottish *Lancelot* and numerous passages of *The Wallace* are reminiscent of the highly sophisticated cultural ambience of the Scottish court in the late Middle Ages. In this light of reciprocity, Douglas' masterpiece, the translation of the *Aeneid*, can be considered the culmination of John Barbour's literary efforts to create a distinctive vernacular tradition in Scots.

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